OCTOBER 17, 1988 • $2.25

Robert C. Tucker: Gorbachev And Stalin's Ghost

THE FEMINIZATION OF HISTORY · MICHAEL WOOD ON ITALO CALVINO

WAS
BUSH
R FIRST
SBAND?

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Washington's Most Overrated Man

How Jim Baker does it, by Fred Barnes

#729D**********3-DIGIT
#LABAOR00097#
690976 LAB AOR00099 H458 JAN
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE 195
ROY HAMMER LIB 38#1
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harry Selker, M.D.
Boston, Massachusetts

AFTER SPENDING 12 YEARS IN AN EMERGENCY ROOM, HE'S GLAD HE DRIVES A VOLVO.

Harry Selker bought his first Volvo because it was a tough, durable, reliable car.

And because back when he bought it, in the 1960's, driving a Volvo seemed like the anti-establishment thing to do.

But after 12 years of working in emergency rooms and hospitals, seeing the results of numerous automobile accidents, Dr. Selker has discovered another reason for driving a Volvo.

It seems like the only intelligent thing to do.

VOLVO
A car you can believe in.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
OCT 9 1988

THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,848

WASHINGTON, D.C. — OCTOBER 17, 1988

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
MICHAEL KINSLEY
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN (on leave)
Acting Managing Editor
JAMES S. GIBNEY
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT (on leave), MORTON M. KONDRACKE, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, ROBERT WRIGHT
Associate Editor
ANDREW SULLIVAN
New Republic Books Editor
(Basic Books)
BILL NEWLIN

1988 Politics
HENDRIK HERTZBERG
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry
RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Architecture
HERBERT MUSCHAMP

Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE, JAMES K. GLASSMAN, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER, MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL, RICHARD L. STROUT, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER, NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN, MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Assistant Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Associate
ELDON S. SARTE
Literary Assistant
SARA MOSLE
Reporter-Researchers
JAMES BENNET, ZACHARY CITRON, WENDY KOHN, DAVID KURAPKA, MICHAEL NEWMAN

President and Publisher
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Associate Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Circulation Director
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Manager
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Circulation Assistant
KRISTIN CONRADI
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
ANJU C. KHOT
Back Issues and Reception
MAXINE OAKLEY
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... INSTANT PHILOSOPHER
George Bush sorts out the abortion thing.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... In defense of fact checkers, arms control, Nixon, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... INCURIOUS GEORGE
Third in our series of editorials on the lies of George Bush.

A MYSTERY SOLVED
Why Bush reminds women of their first husband.

NOTEBOOK
Farewell to the zeitgeist, &c.

10 **CHARLES PAUL FREUND** ..... THE MILLENNIAL ZEITGEIST
The last Zeitgeist Checklist you'll ever need.

12 **HENDRIK HERTZBERG** ..... CAMPAIGN '88: A PRIG OR A FOOL
The first debate offered an exciting choice.

13 **JAMES BENNET** ..... ACLU TOO, BUDDY
Richard Thornburgh flees his principles.

15 **FRED BARNES** ..... MR. SCHMOOZE
James Baker was a good Reagan chief of staff and an OK treasury secretary. So how come he's been anointed a political wonder of nature?

17 **BROOKS JACKSON** ..... SITTING PRETTY
The 1988 congressional elections are already over. Here are the results.

20 **ROBERT C. TUCKER** ..... GIVING UP THE GHOST
The real debate in the Soviet Union now is not about *perestroika*. It's about Stalin.

36 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: EMERGING—AND SUBMERGING
The rise of East Asian film; the decline of Shirley MacLaine.

38 **MICHAEL WOOD** ..... ON THE EDGE OF SILENCE
Six Memos for the Next Millennium by Italo Calvino
Under the Jaguar Sun by Italo Calvino

42 **JOHN DRURY** ..... POEM *Retreat*

43 **EUGEN WEBER** ..... RETURN TO GENDER
Gender and the Politics of History by Joan Wallach Scott

46 **TOM LECLAIR** ..... P.S.
The Letter Left to Me by Joseph McElroy

48 **ELIE KEDOURIE** ..... BETWEEN IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE
Operation Babylon by Shlomo Hillel

50 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... SPIN CYCLE

COVER by Jeff Wong for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 15.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 199, Number 16, Issue 3,848, October 17, 1988. (Printed in the U.S. on September 28, 1988.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 4 & 11, July 18 & 25, Aug. 8 & 15, and Sept. 12 & 19, 1988) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $56; foreign, $81; Canada, $70. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1988 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322.** For subscription problems call **800-525-0643.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

INSTANT PHILOSOPHER

"Frankly," said Jim Baker, so you knew something disingenuous was coming, "Frankly," said George Bush's campaign chairman the morning after the debate, "he thinks that a woman in a situation like that would be more properly considered an additional victim . . . that she would need help and love and not punishment." In the debate, Dukakis accused Bush of wanting to brand women seeking abortions as criminals and Bush conceded that he hadn't "sorted out" the punishment thing. Overnight, he sorted it out.

Well, as "Saturday Night Live" 's Church Lady likes to say, "How convEEEEENient." I love the image of George Bush skipping the debate post-mortems ("Sorry, guys, got some hard thinkin' to do . . .") and retiring to struggle alone with his conscience—perhaps reading a bit of Kant or calling up Allan Bloom ("Hate to bother you, professor . . . yes, I know it's 4 a.m. . . .")—in order to reflect on this obvious question that had never occurred to him in his many years of inconsistent statements on the subject of abortion; emerging at dawn, haggard and red-eyed, but with a new moral synthesis: punish the doctor, "help and love" the patient.

But it won't do. First of all, the 1988 Republican Party Platform declares that "the 14th Amendment's protections apply to unborn children." This means the fetus is a person with full legal rights, and abortion is murder. It's that simple. If so, a woman who hires an abortionist is exactly like a woman who hires a contract killer to knock off her child. Since the Republican platform also endorses the death penalty, it would seem that the Republican Party actually sanctions the execution of women who choose abortion. Farfetched? Look, they wrote it, not me.

Now maybe George Bush doesn't agree with every provision of the GOP platform, which is by no means as "moderate" as he wishes to portray himself. Of course, he *is* a card-carrying member of the Republican Party. In fact, unlike Michael Dukakis and the ACLU, Bush (or at least his handlers) had a substantial role in setting Republican policy. So what are we to think? Bush, like Dukakis, had better produce a list of the items on which he disagrees with this extremist organization he has chosen to align himself with. Otherwise, we'll have to draw our own conclusions.

Even crediting Bush with more sense than his party, his new moral synthesis on abortion is deficient. There is no logical theory of criminality that can brand an activity as criminal while labeling someone who willfully procures that activity as a "victim." The nearest analogy would be people who want to "decriminalize" the buying and possession of drugs, while keeping the laws against dealers—a view certainly not shared by George Bush. The Bush synthesis on abortion would require throwing out all the standard doctrines of criminal law relating to accessories, accomplices, coconspirators, etc. "Help?" "Love?" Talk about being soft on crime!

So maybe Bush should rethink. I mean, what the heck, he's done it before. In 1980 he actually favored government funding of abortion in some cases. By 1984 he had "no recollection" of this. ("My position is like Ronald Reagan's. Put that down. Mark that down. Good. You got it.") In 1988 he's trying to balance himself on the point where ambiguity intersects with hypocrisy and schizophrenia. He talks a lot about adoption.

Abortion is not the only area in which Bush is tripping over himself in his search for the middle ground. The Republican National Committee has put out a fat book titled "The Hazards of Duke: Unabridged," all about the alleged perils of Dukakis-style liberalism. Near the beginning is a facetious "Warning to User: Dukakis positions are subject to change without notice." GOP chairman Frank Fahrenkopf says of Dukakis in the accompanying press release: "One caveat, a chameleon can change its color many times."

I opened the volume at random and found myself staring at an indictment of the minimum wage as a destroyer of jobs. The next page attacks government-mandated parental leave as an excessive burden on small business. Warning to user: George Bush now favors both these Dukakoid-liberal excesses—in fact he recently endorsed an increase in the minimum wage—while continuing his attacks on Dukakis as being outside the mainstream. Perhaps Fahrenkopf should rename his book "The Hazards of Bush."

Bush has been amazingly successful at getting away with these midcourse corrections, at attacking "liberals" while seizing liberal positions. On abortion, the *Wall Street Journal* reports that right-to-lifers trust Bush to be on their side, and understand his need to trim his sails for the campaign. "He doesn't have to showcase the issue," says Pat Robertson's former campaign manager, "as long as he's taken the stand that he has." This sounds an awful lot like the quote from Representative Peter Kostmayer that Republicans have been brandishing, in which he allegedly tells women, environmentalists, and gays, "Just shut up. You'll get everything you want after the election."

The case against flip-flops is not that a politician has changed his mind, but the suspicion that he *hasn't* really changed his mind. Unfortunately for the Democrats, it's hard to make a convincing case that George Bush is a secret extremist, since he so obviously lacks true political principles of any sort. His very record of lifelong flip-flops and postures of convenience protects him. Dukakis, by contrast, suffers from the disadvantage of having given some evidence of believing what he says, though this is a disadvantage he's working hard to overcome.

It's tempting to ask what it says about Bush that he has been opining about abortion all these years without having even thought of one of the central questions the issue raises. But what this says about Bush's mental capacity or reflectiveness is less important than what it says about the Reaganization of American politics: the fleeing by politicians of all stripes (Dukakis, too) from any suggestion that any policy on any subject has any undesirable consequences whatsoever. We can spend without paying, go to war without killing or dying, criminalize abortion without making women criminals. "The truth hurts," brags Bush, then he goes on to promise not to raise taxes. When has he ever told an audience a truth that hurts, except by accident, a "gaffe"? "No taxes . . . read my lips." What a tough guy. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OXYMORON:

Post-Industrial, World-Class Economy

It's become fashionable in recent years to say that manufacturing is passe—that the future U.S. economy will prosper and grow based on service and financial industries.

But the idea of a "post-industrial, world-class" economy is a contradiction in terms. Manufacturing is essential to long-term U.S. economic growth. Here are a few reasons why:

- Manufacturing is responsible for 95 percent of all private research and development in the U.S. Research and development is the key to new products, processes, higher productivity and, hence, higher living standards.
- Manufacturing has a commanding effect on the overall economy. Its purchases represent 40 percent of gross domestic product, its shipments nearly 60 percent. When manufacturing unemployment rises 1 percent, unemployment in the rest of the economy goes up an average of 2 percent.
- Manufacturing workers are among the most highly skilled and educated people in America's workforce. This translates into high-wage jobs.

Manufacturing drives economic activity the world over. How do we keep U.S. manufacturing working for America?

The same policies that are good for the economy broadly will be good for manufacturing—a balanced federal budget, tax policies that promote saving and investment, a fairly valued dollar that allows American exports to flourish, and open markets at home and abroad.

Manufacturing is an essential element in a healthy, dynamic American economy. We need a national debate during this election year and beyond about the direction of economic policy and how it affects manufacturing.

Eastman Kodak Company would like to send you a free copy of a study, "The Case for Manufacturing in America's Future." Please call toll-free:

1-800-44-KODAK
Extension 962

AMERICA WON'T MAKE IT WITHOUT MANUFACTURING

Kodak

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

JUMPING THE CHECKERS

To the editors:
We were extremely disturbed to read your description of a fact checker's story of an exchange with Gail Sheehy during the preparation of her September 1987 profile of Gary Hart for *Vanity Fair* ("Are You Completely Bald?" by Richard Blow and Ari Posner, September 26). Your statement that *Vanity Fair* published a quote from Warren Beatty that was attributed to Gary Hart "because it sounds better," and felt free to do so because "he'd never sue," is not only untrue but deeply offensive and unfair. The magazine has a strong commitment to accurate reporting and we go to great lengths to ensure it.

TINA BROWN
Editor in chief, Vanity Fair
New York, New York

The editors reply:
The anecdote comes from someone who was present, whom we regard as trustworthy.

To the editors:
Did someone check Richard Blow and Ari Posner's facts on whether the *New York Times* has fact checkers (they say "none")? In the articles I've done for the *Times* I have been meticulously checked, even in personal essays—for exactly how many wives Henry VIII had before producing a son, for spelling of names, etc.

The most startling fact checked was for an article on children and entertaining, in which I mentioned my 40th birthday party. A fact checker called me and, among other things, asked for my birth date, year and day. I supplied it automatically, but then asked why he wanted it. "Oh," he said, "we just want to be sure you really had it." I figure he was about 21, and the reality of being 40—which nobody, not even a happy celebrant, would claim unless it was true—just never occurred to him.

SUSAN FERRARO
White Plains, New York

To the editors:
Was it too much to hope that *two* authors of an article on fact checking could between them get their facts straight? Apparently so, given their intriguing ("planted?") reference to "an ancient Greek galleon." This is an anachronism on the order of "a Civil War crossbow." According to J. H. Parry's *Age of Reconnaissance* (which I cite because it is not only a genuine book, but was even published by a subsidiary of the infallible *New York Times*), the galleon was invented in Venice "between 1526 and 1530."

Clearly TNR needs to do its bit in the war to save Western civilization by finally hiring a fact checker.

DAVID A. LUPHER
Tacoma, Washington

BALANCE AND ARMS CONTROL

To the editors:
Charles Krauthammer's "The End of Arms Control" (August 29) is a brilliant discourse on the folly of START in particular and arms control in general. However, he is not satisfied with having made his case. He goes on to declare that "the great powers have come to recognize that their nuclear arsenals are *useless* as actual instruments of war" (emphasis added). This is a very ambiguous and dangerous formulation. He had just demonstrated that peace depends on maintaining a nuclear *balance* assured by an invulnerable retaliatory nuclear force; so nuclear weapons are not useless, they are necessary but impotent only so long as that balance is secure. Conceptual clarity is crucial here to avoid the nuclear disarmament trap.

ELIAS M. SCHWARZBART
New York, New York

To the editors:
Charles Krauthammer posits that expenditures on conventional forces needed to offset a reduction in nuclear arms will eliminate potential savings. Not true. Expenditures on conventional forces will increase regardless of expenditures on nuclear arms because such forces are necessary to protect our interests in situations where military, non-nuclear intervention is required, i.e., virtually all military situations.

SHELLY B. KULWIN
Chicago, Illinois

STRIFE IN THE FAST LANE

To the editors:
In the August 29 Washington Diarist ("How To Be Plump"), Townsend Davis proudly announces, "I usually drive about 15 miles per hour above the speed limit, for the simple reason that it gets me places more quickly." What marvelous logic! Can we look forward to more Davis confessions in future issues? Perhaps he'll tell us that he cheats on his income tax, for the simple reason that it gets him a bigger refund. Or that he shoplifts at department stores, for the simple reason that it gets him merchandise more cheaply.

Davis brags that he responded to the sight of a "Speed Limit 65" sign in rural North Carolina by accelerating to 80. He should know that in North Carolina we usually throw lawbreakers in jail, for the simple reason that it gets them off our highways.

PATRICK M. BERRY
Raleigh, North Carolina

PREDICTIONS '88

To the editors:
Andrew Sullivan ("He's Wrong, August 29") ridicules Richard Nixon for having predicted a deadlocked Democratic convention and that Pat Robertson would be a relevant force in New Orleans. Why single out Nixon? At the time of his pronouncements every journalist in America was speculating similarly. Sullivan quotes Nixon: "Dukakis would guarantee a loss in November in the unlikely event of the party once again agreeing to self-destruct by nominating him." Nixon is right. On Inauguration Day George Bush will be in the White House. And Michael Dukakis? He'll probably be on a well-deserved vacation somewhere reading the revised edition of "Swedish Land Use Planning."

JEFF EBNER
Ottawa, Canada

TED & FRED

To the editors:
Fred Barnes's inside looks at "Campaign '88" are ever sharp and enlightening, but who told him that Ted Kennedy is running for anything? In his August 29 piece ("Cheap Shots") Senator Kennedy is likened (along with two others—oh yeah, Dukakis and Bentsen) to the upper-class, born-to-wealth George Bush. Fair, but irrelevant. A subse-

continued on page 49

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC
OCTOBER 17, 1988

INCURIOUS GEORGE

In assessing George Bush's role in the Reagan administration's foreign policy failures, it's easy to confuse the Iran-*contra* arms affair with the Noriega drug-trafficking affair. Both involved subterranean dealings with unsavory characters, both culminated in fiascos, and in both cases Bush is doctoring the record to escape responsibility. If you squint your eyes a little, the two episodes blur together into a single docudrama: Iranama, a tale of how gunrunners and drug dealers drove a vice president to wholesale deceit. But for all their similarities, the two episodes make quite different statements about Bush's capacity to govern the nation, each negative in its own way.

At the Wake Forest debate with Michael Dukakis, Bush tried to minimize the Reagan administration's once-cozy relationship with Panama's drug-trafficking dictator, Manuel Noriega, a relationship that included paying him for intelligence and other services. "It was the Reagan-Bush administration that brought this man to justice," Bush said. "And as the governor of Massachusetts knows, there was no evidence that governor—that, uh, Mr. Noriega—was involved in drugs—no hard evidence—until we indicted him."

Reagan and Bush brought Noriega to justice? Noriega's indictment last February was engineered by enterprising Florida prosecutors, with no encouragement from the White House or Justice Department. In fact, the administration at first resisted the two indictments and only later decided to roll with the punches—to try and dump Noriega by inducing a Philippines-style popular insurrection. The result was the embarrassing failure that festers to this day.

Bush's claim that the administration had no hard evidence of Noriega's wrongdoings until shortly before the indictments took shape is also untrue. We'll leave aside the administration reports about Noriega's drug involvement circulating even back in 1976, when Bush headed the CIA. (And we won't dwell on the fact that, when CIA Director Bush heard that Noriega had paid U.S. soldiers for highly classified information, he chose not to raise a fuss.) Let's focus instead on the past eight years. In 1983 Noriega met with members of Colombia's Medellín cocaine cartel to discuss its plans for setting up business in Panama. In 1985 he emceed a meeting among competing Latin American drug traffickers, helping them divvy up the turf harmoniously. Thanks to a U.S. informant (backed up in the second case by electronic intercepts), both meetings were noted in the government's classified "National Intelligence Daily." In March of this year, a former National Security Council staff member summarized for Congress the long-standing evidence of drug trafficking by the Panamanian military, which Noriega heads: "Available to me as an officer of the NSC, and available to any authorized official of the U.S. government, is a plethora of human intelligence, electronic intercepts, and satellite and overflight photography that, taken together, constitute not just a smoking gun, but rather a 21-cannon barrage of evidence."

Perhaps what Bush meant to say in the Wake Forest debate was what he has said in the past: that, whatever evidence the administration had, he personally didn't have evidence of Noriega's drug dealings until 1988. This is almost certainly false. In December 1985 Bush met with Edward Everett Briggs, then ambassador to Panama. Briggs, a longtime critic of Noriega, had during the past few weeks been sending cables to the State Department recounting allegations of Noriega's role in drug trafficking. A memorandum prepared for Bush prior to the meeting described its purpose as to "discuss U.S. relations with Panama and narcotics matters." Early this year, after the 1985 memorandum was leaked, Bush claimed that Noriega's *personal* role in drug trafficking was not discussed at the meeting. Briggs, after initially declining comment, backed up this story. Other administration officials contacted by the *New York Times* anonymously contradicted it.

A week before the 1985 meeting, newly appointed national security adviser John Poindexter, by then familiar with the evidence of Noriega's drug involvement, had gone to Panama and warned Noriega about drug corruption among Panamanian officials. On June 12, 1986, the *New York Times* reported this mission and recounted evidence against Noriega. Bush contends that none of this clued him in—that, indeed, for years to come he was unaware of Poindexter's mission and of its purpose, even though reports of both had been on newsstands all over America.

Is any of this possible? That Bush, head of the adminis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tration's drug interdiction effort, met to discuss Panamanian drug trafficking with an ambassador deeply concerned about Noriega's role in it and didn't hear about these concerns? That Bush, one of eight members of the National Security Council, didn't get word of the national security adviser's warning to Noriega about drug trafficking? Let's suppose for a second that Bush isn't lying. What are we left with? The image of a Vice President Magoo, even more oblivious of the world around him than President Reagan.

This is the theme that unifies the Iran-*contra* and Noriega affairs. Both leave us with the following possibilities: Bush is either telling large-scale lies about the specifics of the cases or is hugely exaggerating when he claims to have been integrally, and competently, involved in administration policy. Or, of course, both.

In other respects the two episodes are quite different. The Noriega affair isn't necessarily a case of bad policy judgment. Granted, Noriega has a history of torture, decapitation, and other forms of sadism that would tempt a morally sensitive administration to cut him loose. Still, we can conceive of circumstances under which a president might choose not to pick a fight with a drug-running dictator, especially when he's a valuable intelligence source. (And we don't buy Michael Dukakis's claim, made during the debate, that the administration's coziness with Noriega has steered America's youth toward drugs.) In fact, we even understand the temptation of Bush to lie about his knowledge of Noriega's activities, given the present anti-drug hysteria. Then again, Bush helped whip up that hysteria. Indeed, he and Ronald Reagan have been in the forefront of the movement to place the blame for drug problems on evil foreigners rather than on ourselves, where it belongs. That, ultimately, is why he finds himself having to conceal his role in the Noriega mess. And that, incidentally, is what lends such pungent irony to another ingredient in the Bush sleaze factor: the fact that some of his closest advisers have made lots of consulting money by polishing the images of Noriega (see Allan Nairn's "Spencer for Hire," TNR, September 26) and Lynden O. Pindling, prime minister of the Bahamas, after they were tainted by charges of drug involvement.

Perhaps the most pathetic point raised by the Noriega affair is Bush's competence in deception. If you're going to lie, as presidents occasionally must, at least do it well.

IN THE CASE of Iranamok, the questions are more serious. Here the administration's policy was inexcusable, and Bush's knowing support of it is now undeniable, notwithstanding his continued denials.

Bush's contention all along has been that he was only dimly aware of the Iranian arms sale, and had no idea that it amounted to an arms-for-hostages swap; nor did he know of George Shultz's and Caspar Weinberger's opposition to it. He only saw the light, he says, in December 1986, after the deal hit the newspapers. Bush said last year, "I wish, with clairvoyant hindsight, that I had known that we were trading arms for hostages . . . and then I would have weighed in very heavily with the president to that effect." Anyone who has read the recently published book *Men of Zeal*, an account of Iranamok written by a bipartisan team of senators, William Cohen and George Mitchell, will have trouble believing that clairvoyance was required. Eyes and ears should have been sufficient.

In August 1985 Bush attended a meeting at which Bud McFarlane, then national security adviser, discussed Iran's request for 100 TOW missiles in exchange for four hostages, prompting Shultz to warn President Reagan that it would be a mistake to fall into "the arms-for-hostages business." At two meetings in January 1986 Bush was present when the president was briefed on, and approved, the plan to swap arms for hostages. None of this evidence makes Bush's claims of innocence seem quite as silly as does a briefing on the arms sales he received from an Israeli official in July 1986. Bush aide Craig Fuller, the only other person present, took copious notes and then prepared a memorandum that has the Israeli official referring to the release of hostages at least five times, and noting at least once that that was a primary purpose of the sale.

Though professing ignorance of this connection between arms and hostages, Bush claims to have had some queasiness about the deal and "to have expressed certain reservations on certain aspects." To whom did he express them? Shultz recalls, in reference to a meeting in January 1986 at which he and Weinberger argued against trading arms for hostages, "It was clear to me by the time we went out that the president, the vice president, and [the others] all had one opinion and I had a different one and Cap shared it." In early February, shortly after Reagan approved the deal, Poindexter wrote in a memo that, though Shultz and Weinberger still opposed it, "President and VP are solid in taking the position that we have to try."

The decisive evidence that Bush has been lying about Iranamok comes, comically enough, from Bush himself. After maintaining for more than a year that he went along with the arms deal because he didn't know it was aimed at the release of hostages, he said to Dan Rather in their celebrated confrontation, "I went along with it because . . . I heard about Mr. Buckley [a hostage] being tortured to death. . . . So if I erred, I erred on the side of trying to get those hostages out of there."

This sort of sympathy is natural. But painful experience has taught that giving in to terrorists, however tempting, is a bad idea in the long run. In fact, that has long been the professed policy of the Reagan administration. "I wrote the anti-terrorist report for this government," Bush boasted in the debate, "the best anti-terrorist report written." What he didn't say is that he found himself unable to abide by it.

You wouldn't know it to hear Michael Dukakis talk, but Iranamok and the Noriega affair together are only blips on the Reagan administration's foreign policy record, which has more than its share of successes. So even if Bush's silence in these matters was decisive, he didn't doom the nation's geostrategy. But the questions of judgment, competence, and simple honesty raised by Iranama are cause for worry about the nation's future under a Bush administration. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Mystery Solved

Three months ago (TNR, July 11), we asked readers to help us explain the widespread joke, "George Bush reminds every woman of her first husband." We said that everyone in our office thought it was funny, but nobody could agree exactly why. Ninety-three readers—42 women and 51 men—responded to our challenge. Although the interpretations were varied, certain undeniable patterns emerged. (Keep in mind that this was before Bush's handlers transformed Caspar Milquetoast into a "kinder, gentler" Jack the Ripper.)

Characteristically of TNR readers, several challenged the joke's premise. "In my circle," wrote Marcus Broussard of Abbeville, Louisiana, "George Bush reminds every woman of her parole officer." One anonymous New York City resident reports: "My wife's version is that the vice president reminds every woman of her gynecologist."

"All ex-mates," explains Elizabeth Rock of Providence, Rhode Island, "regardless of their myriad other flaws, share one unifying characteristic: the ability to produce a chronic, low-grade irritation that abrades the nerves like a mosquito's whine." James Bittker of Syracuse, New York, takes the same metaphor into the realm of poetry, imagining a rainy-day drive in the family station wagon: "To the ceaseless metronome of the windshield wipers, he jabbers, lectures, and whines *about everything*, buzzing on and on, this man, surprisingly athletic and intelligent, with the tiny head of a grotesque insect she feels compelled to squash against the windshield. How did she ever confuse him for Daddy?" Mrs. Herbert Garratt of Eustis, Florida, turns this last point around, asserting that Bush "appears like the husband who never recovered from the shock of finding wifey isn't mommie."

Many entries played variations on the theme that a first husband is someone whose paper credentials seem appealing—especially to parents and most especially to mother—but whose appeal wears thin: "the quintessential mistake [who] at first blush seems ideal, but who, upon closer inspection, is shown to be woefully inadequate and somewhat pathetic" (Elizabeth Herbert, Louisville, Kentucky). "He looked good on paper" (David Gram, Plainfield, Vermont). "He seems OK until you live with him for a few years" (Alan Drexler, LaGrange, Georgia).

"George is a résumé, not a man," explains Linda Sikorski of Oceanside, California. "When the passionless marriage ends, the straight-arrow qualifications that made him marriageable become insufferable." Sally Jean Smith of Santa Monica makes the same point more brusquely: "Your first husband was the one you married, firm in your belief that there are more important things in life than great sex."

Martha Grasty of Sacramento best expressed another repeated theme: "It's those familiar half-truths and inept excuses Mr. Bush routinely utters. As with first husbands, he doesn't really believe what he is saying a lot of the time, and we sense that."

First prize, for combining most of the above elements in a pungent paragraph, goes to a man, unfortunately: Rick Lyman, the first and only husband of his first and only wife, and New York bureau chief of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*:

> An overly nice guy with an agreeable personality that quickly wears thin, whose handsomeness vanishes the more you study it and whose goofiness increases in like increments, whose absence of sexual or intellectual threat only temporarily seems comforting, who thrives in a pampered (say, collegiate) environment but only seems twerpy when you introduce him to your high school friends—in short, the kind of upright chap a young girl always *thought* she wanted, only to find him, in very short order, to be entirely unsatisfactory. Usually played in the movies by Ralph Bellamy.

Mr. Lyman was not the only reader to nominate Ralph Bellamy for the part. Honesty requires us to note that Mr. Bellamy, though often typecast as a drip, also played FDR in *Sunrise at Campobello*.

Notebook

□ FAREWELL TO THE ZEITGEIST: With this issue, we bid a fond farewell to "The Zeitgeist Checklist," which Charles Paul Freund has been contributing to TNR for more than two years. Henceforth Chuck will be applying his mystical ability to sense the fevers and passions coursing through the culture as an editor for the "Outlook" section of the *Washington Post*. To help us prepare for its future absence, the "ZC" this week charts the Zeitgeist through the next millennium.

□ DO TELL:

Scientists splice quail to chicken

Brain cell transplant affects behavior

—*Sacramento Bee*, September 10

(thanks to Alan C. Elms, Davis, California)

□ NO PLEASING SOME PEOPLE:

Drought takes toll on '88 fair

—*Marietta* (Ohio) *Times*, September 4

Fair officials need a dry day

—same paper, September 5

(thanks to Adam W. Minton, Columbus, Ohio)

□ DEAVER'S FURLOUGH: Tough-on-crime Republicans like Vice President Bush have been oddly silent about a federal judge's decision to give former White House aide Michael Deaver the classic wrist-slap—a three-year suspended sentence—for his perjury conviction. A jury found what was undeniably the case: that Deaver brazenly lied to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Congress and to a grand jury in an attempt to cover up his violation of the Ethics in Government Act, a loophole-ridden anti-influence-peddling law that can be broken only with the greatest effort. It's true that Deaver is not a violent criminal, and he is unlikely to repeat his influence peddling since he no longer has any influence. However, there is some thought in the more naive, idealistic circles that perhaps prominent public officials should be—or be made—an example. And it hardly sends a strong message to would-be criminals when President Reagan says of a convicted criminal: "He didn't do anything wrong."

□ DEVIATIONISM: Michael Fumento, a legal affairs writer for the *Washington Times*, wrote an article for *Commentary* (November 1987) called "The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS," suggesting that homosexuals, liberals—and even a few renegade conservatives—were using the epidemic for political ends, and suddenly the conservative world was his oyster. He was hired as the AIDS specialist at that Reagan-era cell of conservative thinking, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. He was contacted in March by a right-wing think tank and all but offered a prestigious fellowship in order to complete a book (commissioned by New Republic Books). Then he published a second piece, in TNR (August 8 & 15), titled "The Political Uses of an Epidemic." This time, he expanded on a point briefly mentioned in the *Commentary* article, and concentrated on conservatives who were misrepresenting AIDS for political reasons. Suddenly he was relieved of his AIDS duties at the commission and transferred to an unrelated job. (As a civil servant, he could not

THE MILLENNIAL ZEITGEIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

The Last Zeitgeist Checklist

1. ALTERED STATES

Media. Nation-states are now understood in terms of audiences. Celebrities are introduced directly into our nervous systems; we have personal (and addictive) relationships with them. One distrusts and despises those audiences enamored of celebrities other than one's own favorites. Our internal lives are someone else's fiction; there is no difference between media and life.

2. THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION

Politics. Liberty is an entertainment format. So is communism. So is terrorism. Politics has been reduced to its illusions, to everyone's relief; no system entails any risk. Lower-class dissidents are materially rewarded, thus losing interest in their own ideals. Upper-class dissidents are content to write for quarterly journals or become stars on the dissident channel.

3. HORSEMAN, PASS BY

Earth. There are three remaining land environments: megacities, food zones, and garbage dumps. People are accustomed to the worldwide smell—exacerbated by unrelenting heat—and spend little time in the dangerous outdoors anyway. The last forest has been granted to the hamburger industry, which needs yet more grazing land. Committees continue to discuss ecology.

4. LIVING IN A GREAT BIG WAY

Cities. Cities stretch endlessly, but there are few socially diverse public places; life—shopping, eating, etc.—is entirely stratified. Subcultures, whether social or professional, are rarely in contact. What street life there is is lived by the media-deprived; those with means live in private with their leisure and bathroom machinery.

5. DECLINE OF THE BEST

Ignorance. There has been an enormous increase in knowledge, but almost no one knows anything. Educators are much relieved; they now spend their time with a tiny number of students interested in learning something. Such scholars—though they make everything work—are held in contempt by the rest of humanity, most of which is awarded advanced degrees at birth.

6. GIVE US THIS DAY

Values. Self-reliance and responsibility are antique and little-understood ideas, except by the technological priesthood and a bohemian minority. The bulk of humanity is dependent on conditions it does not comprehend, and defers to authority in virtually all circumstances. Authority too is value-free, devoting itself entirely to survival and diversion.

7. LET THERE BE LITE

God. Science-based mysticism, built on unprovable theories of physics, is rampant. The Church of the Multiple Unity, for example, posits one God per universe, but an infinite number of universes in which each of us lives an alternate life. One prays for—and communes with—one's variant selves. It is pleasant to believe that elsewhere and elsewhen, one is much happier.

8. DONE UNTO OTHERS

Order. There is a great deal of crime, but it is no longer considered a problem. Proles victimizing proles is a viewing opportunity for the media classes. Surveillance channels offer full-color splatter news replays day and night. Victim-revenge events are must-viewing, outdrawing all but the most dangerous sports events.

9. NAVEL EXERCISES

Drugs. The major controversy over drugs revolves around which ones to take when; they are now considered a part of one's diet. Since one takes drugs to boost memory and intelligence, there is no argument against drugs that enhance sports and pleasure. Anyway, public order bosses don't really object to an omphaloskeptic society.

10. THEM

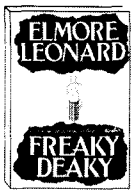
Space. Colonization of space has provided a new outlet for xenophobia. Dwellers on the moon, Mars, and Titan have been there for generations, and are now considered merely foreigners. Living in difficult circumstances, they retain a pioneer culture. Here, they are considered comic but potentially dangerous provincials. One rarely thinks of them, except with distrust.

BONUS: THE AULD DAUNCE

Sex. People think a great deal about sex. When they can't get it, they buy it. They are titillated by pornography and tell dirty jokes. Possessiveness has ensured the survival of families, but partners cheat on each other frequently. People dress, decorate themselves, and buy most of what they buy so as to enhance their desirability. Moralists claim things have never been so lax.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

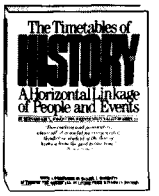
A book is a book is a book. Pick any 3 for $3. And you don't have to buy any more. Ever or never.



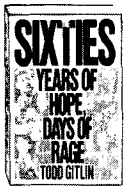
*404. Two ex-60s radicals exchange idealism for greed and brotherhood for revenge.
Hardcover: $17.95
QPB: $8.95

*131. How higher education has affected today's students.
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $7.95

*403. A hands-on guide that explains how to successfully start a business.
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $8.95

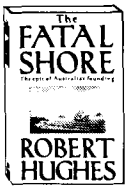


267. The story of civilization in a unique chart format
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $15.95

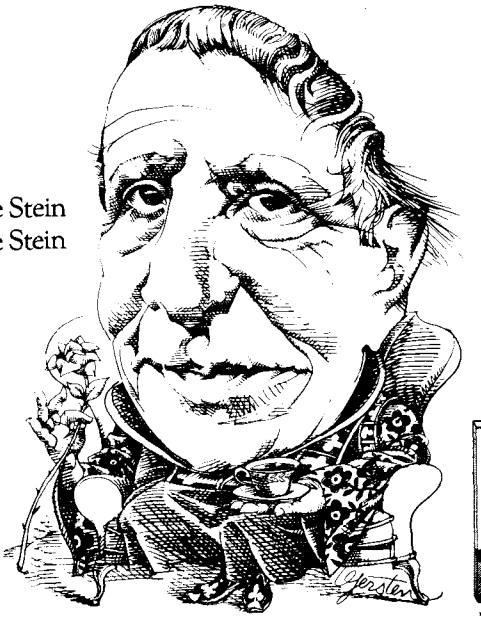


*170. "A triumph of lucidly written popular history," says *Publishers Weekly*.
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $9.95

*793. A definitive collection with 7 previously unpublished tales.
Hardcover: $22.50
QPB: $10.95



477. The dramatic saga of the founding of Australia.
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $10.95

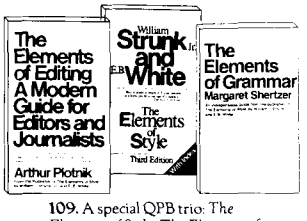


Gertrude Stein
Gertrude Stein

(Translation: 3 books, 3 bucks. No commitment. No kidding.)

And a great deal is a great deal is a great deal—like any 3 books for just $3 (plus shipping and handling). After that you don't have to buy any more books ever.

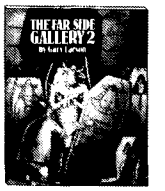
As a QPB member you'll never be part of the lost generation—you'll receive the *Review* about every 3½ weeks (15 times a year). It's full of excerpts, reviews, photos, and books. And QPB books are priced at up to 60% less than their hardcover counterparts. In addition, every book you buy after this introductory offer will earn you Bonus Points which can be traded in for free books—you pay just shipping and handling. What is the answer? To join QPB, of course.


The Elements of Editing A Modern Guide for Editors and Journalists
Arthur Plotnik
William Strunk Jr. E.B. White
The Elements of Style
Third Edition
The Elements of Grammar
Margaret Shertzer

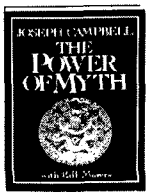
109. A special QPB trio: *The Elements of Style, The Elements of Grammar, The Elements of Editing.*
3-volume set
QPB: $10.95

*228. A provocative account of "chaos"—science's hot new theoretical frontier.
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $9.95

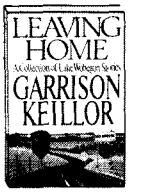
*259. A fascinating examination of the 2400-year-old trial of Socrates.
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $8.95



414. Over 600 of Larson's quirky creations and most bizarre cartoons.
QPB: $8.95

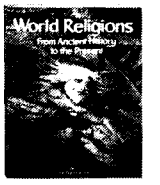


423. A scholar tells how myths have shaped our lives. A PBS TV series.
Hardcover: $27.50
QPB: $15.95



*402. From the author of *Lake Wobegon Days*.
Hardcover: $18.95
QPB: $8.95

428. The best-selling biography of the daring aviator, Beryl Markham.
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $8.95



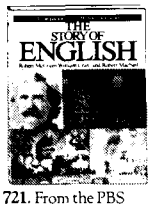
601. The evolution of beliefs throughout history. Illustrated.
Hardcover: $29.95
QPB: $12.95

*410. The best-selling autobiography by a severely handicapped young Irishman.
Hardcover: $16.95
QPB: $8.50

*199. 1988 edition. What to write, how to write it, where to sell it.
Hardcover: $26.95
QPB: $12.95

681. 198 recipes that are as appealing as they are healthful.
Hardcover: $19.95
QPB: $10.95

108. All 210 classic tales, including 32 never before available in English.
Hardcover: $21.95
QPB: $11.50



721. From the PBS series on the evolution of the English language.
Hardcover: $24.95
QPB: $12.95

297. Soothing therapeutic techniques. 150 graphic photographs.
QPB: $9.50

*QPB Exclusive: The only softcover edition now available.

How QPB Membership Works.

Selection: Each *Review* lists a new Selection. If you want it, do nothing—it will be shipped automatically. If you want another book or no book at all, complete the Reply Form always enclosed and return it by the specified date. A shipping and handling charge is added to each shipment.

Return Privilege: If the QPB *Review* is delayed and you receive the Selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return it for credit.

Cancellations: You may cancel membership at any time by notifying QPB. We may cancel your membership if you elect not to buy at least one book in any six-month period.

OK. Send me a book and a book and a book for just $3.

Quality Paperback Book Club,* P.O. Box 8804, Camp Hill, PA 17011-8804

Please enroll me in QPB and send me the 3 choices I've listed below, billing me only $1 each, plus shipping and handling charges. I understand that I am not required to buy another book. You will send me the QPB *Review* (if my account is in good standing) for at least six months. If I have not bought at least one book in any six-month period, you may cancel my membership.

8-16

			Indicate by number your 3 choices:

Name (*Please print clearly.*) QB127-10

Address (Apt.)

City State Zip

QPB® Quality Paperback Book Club®

Prices are generally higher in Canada. © 1988 Quality Paperback Book Club. All orders subject to approval.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

easily be fired.) He was ordered not to speak to reporters about this transfer. His fellowship also disappeared. Then, on September 23, two commission officials appeared in his office and went through his files. The ostensible reason was to make sure he had turned over all AIDS materials to his successor in the job he had been hired for. The cultural similarity between today's conservative zealots and the American Communists of the 1930s and 1940s has often been noted but perhaps never so vividly illustrated. Fumento departed from the party line. He committed the sin of "deviationism." Retribution was swift.

CAMPAIGN '88

A PRIG OR A FOOL

IN THE WAKE of the first presidential "debate" of the fall campaign, the joint news conference held at Wake Forest University on September 25, it seems reasonably safe to predict that the outcome of the election will turn on how the voters answer two questions. First, which is apt to be more important over the next four years, foreign affairs or domestic policy? Second, which is more tolerable, a fool or a prig?

If the answers are foreign affairs and a fool, George Bush wins. If the answers are domestic policy and a prig, Michael Dukakis wins. In the event of a split—a public clamor for goofy health insurance, say, or sanctimonious diplomacy—the election will be so close the loser will demand a recount.

Dukakis dominated the debate, but this does not necessarily mean that he "won" it. It does mean that his only serious opponent—a formidable one—was himself. Bush's managers gloated afterward that Dukakis had revealed himself as a liberal (that awful thing). And so he had, but not in any way that would offend the voters.

During the first half, when the questioning stuck to domestic issues, Dukakis was able to present some of his most politically potent positions, even to explain them in detail. He was able, for example, to outline his proposal for extending health insurance to the 37 million citizens currently without coverage of any kind. He was able to attack Bush's proposal for a capital gains tax cut, saying it would give an average of $30,000 to those making more than $200,000 a year ("Why, that's more than the average teacher makes"). He was able, at last, to rebuke Bush with satisfying sternness for impugning his patriotism over the Pledge of Allegiance "issue." He was able, thanks partly to an artful question from Anne Groer of the *Orlando Sentinel*, to defend his views on abortion, and attack Bush's, on the most advantageous possible ground, which is that banning abortion could brand women criminals for choosing to end a pregnancy.

It gradually became clear that the debate was going well for Dukakis; and as soon as it did, something in his tone subtly altered. Having won some respect from the audience, he seemed to assume they were on his side. His sternness acquired a tinge of hectoring; his earnestness shaded off into smugness; his sharpness pushed against the boundaries of good manners.

More important, when the subject turned to foreign affairs, Dukakis took refuge in me-tooism and in attacks on the periphery of the administration's record, especially the latter. He returned again and again to what he not very variously called "the sale of arms to the Ayatollah," "the sale of arms to the Ayatollah in exchange for hostages," and "a crazy idea that we ought to trade arms to the Ayatollah for hostages." Dukakis had several openings to talk in a visionary way about a post-cold war world in which resources now spent on the military could be diverted to solving global economic and environmental problems. He took none of those openings.

While Dukakis systematically set the pace, Bush wandered in the exotic forest of his own verbiage, vaguely groping for something. Here he is on the problems of the inner cities: "I think part of the answer to this haunting of these children that are out there and suffering is, lies in the extension of Medicaid to challenge the states, and maybe we're going to have to enforce more on the states in terms of Medicaid taking care of these. But Peter"—Peter Jennings of ABC, who had asked the question, recalling that Bush had described himself as haunted by the lives of ghetto children—"so much of it is, gets into a whole other phase of things—the neighborhood, the kind of environment people are growing up in, and that leads me to the programs I'm talking about in terms of education. . . . And so it's a combination of these things. But do not erode out of the system the thousand points of light, the people that are out there trying to help these kids. . . ." That's a fair sample of Bush's mind in operation. The passage is not without meaning, though it's close. It is redolent of a fuzzy, flabby, weak desire to do something good for somebody, unless somebody else objects. Morally, it is an improvement on Reagan's 1980 talk of welfare queens; intellectually, however, it provides little nourishment.

Bush mentioned the thousand points of light even more often than Dukakis mentioned arms to the Ayatollah. The thousand points of light is a phrase from Peggy Noonan's acceptance speech, which Bush recited at the Republican convention. It has to do with voluntary charitable activities. Bush kept referring to it without quite explaining it. When Dukakis finally said acidly, "Being haunted, a thousand points of light—I don't know what that means," he no doubt spoke for many viewers.

Bush swayed and lurched his way through the evening, but the spectacular pratfall the Dukakis forces had hoped for did not come. Dukakis was never less than clear. But he grew more robotic as the minutes ticked by. An anecdote about a father who won't let his young son play ball because he has no health insurance and is afraid of injuries was striking the first time, mechanical the second. A researcher's tidbit that Bush had spoken sympathetically of the nuclear freeze movement in 1982 was tactically

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sound the first time Dukakis used it, overly defensive the second. A Bush one-liner about getting a ride on Dukakis's tank (a reference to an unfortunate photo opportunity that made Dukakis look, as Joe Klein wrote in *New York* magazine, "a bit too much like Rocky the Flying Squirrel") was labored and lame, but a Dukakis riposte late in the debate—"Well, when it comes to ridicule, George, you win a gold medal, I think we can agree on that"—was unfunny bordering on nasty.

The truth is that domestic affairs probably will be more important than foreign affairs over the next four years. Whatever their campaign posturing, the two candidates have similar defense prescriptions (current spending plus inflation) and similar inclinations where the Russians are concerned (make a deal). As long as Gorbachev and *glasnost* persist, the initiative will come mostly from the other side anyway. To the extent the voters understand this, the emphasis will shift back to domestic affairs, which ought to help Dukakis. However, there is no sign the voters do understand it, and Dukakis hasn't done much to educate them. As for the fool vs. prig question, a Bush presidency, as the debate demonstrated, would provide a good deal of public merriment. But the country might be better off governed by a coherent intelligence, even if its owner provides no laughs, either intentionally or unintentionally.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

The shame of Richard Thornburgh.

ACLU TOO, BUDDY

THE American Civil Liberties Union betrayed Richard Thornburgh. In a statement late last month, the attorney general said that he had become "involved" with the ACLU for "a brief period during the 1960s" out of his desire to pursue two issues: the establishment of a public defender's office in Pittsburgh and the protection of rights for the handicapped. Thornburgh explained that he resigned when he realized that the ACLU was abandoning the noble causes of the past to pursue "a separate *political* agenda." Dick Thornburgh didn't leave the ACLU; the ACLU left him.

The minutes of the meetings of the Pittsburgh chapter of the ACLU and the memories of his peers show that Thornburgh protests too much. The records demonstrate that he held a leadership position in the Pittsburgh chapter, serving consecutive terms on the board of directors from January 1967 until May 1969; that during his tenure, the board accepted cases ranging from protecting draft dodgers to fighting prayer in school to backing students who refused to salute the flag; and that Thornburgh left, not because the ACLU had strayed, but because he had found someone new.

Fearing a conflict of interest with his forthcoming responsibilities as U.S. attorney for western Pennsylvania, Thornburgh resigned his position and his membership. "I remember him saying that the Civil Liberties Union had his full support and that he agreed with its basic principles," said Bernard Yardoff, a fellow director present when Thornburgh resigned.

The real question, of course, is not why Dick Thornburgh walked away from the ACLU. It is why, 20 years later, he is running from it. Thornburgh's sincerity is merely the latest casualty in the Bush campaign's ongoing effort to fine-tune the connotations of the hazy non-issues of 1988. At non-issue here appears to be patriotism, conflated with criminal-bashing. From TelePrompTers everywhere, Bush has read the ACLU right out of the lexicon of American patriotism, declaring, "I am not a card-carrying member of the ACLU. I am for the people."

Conversely, Michael Dukakis, who carries the card, is "soft on crime" and against the people. So it must have come as quite a shock when Bush learned that the highest law enforcement official in the land—a recent Reagan appointee and a favorite to stay on in a Bush administration—had helped set policy for this anti-people organization that Ed Meese once branded "a criminals' lobby."

Hence Thornburgh's statement. The attorney general could not say, with Republican Senator Arlen Specter, "There's nothing wrong with belonging to the ACLU." He could not merely point to his perfectly legitimate concerns over conflict of interest. Rather, he had to attest to the weight of the meaning Bush attaches to membership in the ACLU, while denying that his own shoulders once bore it.

Setting aside the thousands of misled voters and Thornburgh's long-standing reputation as a thoughtful moderate, the real victim in this campaign of connotations is the ACLU. Few would deny that the organization has demonstrated a tendency to bend to the left, revealed by occasional inconsistencies such as its wavering record on gun control and its switch from opposition to support of the ERA. Its founder, Roger Baldwin, evinced strong socialist leanings; other early supporters included contributors to these pages. At times, the ACLU's eagerness to point to a treasured list of conservative clients has hinted at tokenism. But all institutions evolve, and while prominent liberals have always served as board members and supported aspects of the ACLU's work, the ACLU has demonstrated a willingness to risk liberal backers to conform to civil libertarian principles. Its defense of Nazis' rights to march in Skokie, Illinois, in 1977 cost the organization so many members that it almost collapsed.

Staff members of the ACLU insist that their "only client is the Bill of Rights." The idea is that the first victim of civil rights abuse is never the last, that each case must be treated, like each termite, as a potential breeder. Essentially, the ACLU is out to keep government off your back, a traditionally "conservative" goal. Its philosophy, put into practice, has earned it the support of the Cato Institute, a generally right-wing libertarian group. It has also often led the ACLU to serve progressive causes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Sound) bite-sized labels cannot convey the ACLU's complex record, a record driven by its principles but shaped by its clients. Clients of the Union tend to share two characteristics: they belong to minority groups whose rights are threatened by the government; and they are generally poor, since they would otherwise hire their own counsel. The result: a caseload seemingly at odds with the organization's vigorously avowed non-partisanship.

But George Bush does more than reverse cause and effect in taking such liberties with his labels. Calling the organization "far left" ignores the diverse crowd of ACLU clients. Since its creation in 1920, the ACLU has defended Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society, Joe McCarthy, George Wallace, and assorted minor racists and religious extremists. Currently, it is aiding such darlings of the right as Oliver North, Lyn Nofziger, and the Tobacco Institute, whose efforts to prevent restrictions on advertising the ACLU supports. Bush is wrong to say that the ACLU stands to the left of the American mainstream; he would be right to say that it stands outside the mainstream. That's precisely why it exists.

The above list of clients includes only the standouts among the more than 6,000 cases the ACLU has pending at any one time. A more telling demonstration of the ACLU's non-partisanship appeared in a recent *New York Times* article surveying the clients of a chapter in Nassau County, New York. The reporter found ten clients who identified themselves as Republicans or conservatives, seven who called themselves Democrats or liberals, and four who professed no partisan leanings—numbers that reflect the demographics of the county.

WHEN HE HAS gone beyond substituting the Union label for specific disagreements with ACLU stances, Bush has made charges that are at best misrepresentative, at worst mistaken, and always misleading. In a recent sally, at the debate in Winston-Salem, Bush suggested that the ACLU hopes to strip the Catholic Church of its tax exemption and to repeal kiddie-porn laws. In fact, the ACLU now considers tax exemptions for religious organizations a settled issue. This was never an anti-Catholic stance, as Bush suggests; the ACLU recently filed an amicus brief supporting the Catholic Church's right to defend its exemption in court. (Dukakis, in any event, does not support the ACLU position on the religious tax exemption.)

The explosive issue of child pornography reveals the risks the ACLU will run when it believes that the First Amendment is threatened. The ACLU supports laws punishing child exploitation, but opposes legislation to ban the depiction of child nudity. "It's like the difference between making it a crime to commit rape, and making it a crime to make films depicting rape. The latter would be a First Amendment case," said Ira Glasser, executive director of the ACLU's national office. The ACLU argues that broad laws restricting publication of child nudity might be extended to ban books on sex education.

On the two other issues to which Bush referred—removing enforced ratings on movies and tearing "Under God" out of the beloved dollar—the ACLU, according to Glasser, has never filed a lawsuit. They are matters of policy, but not practice. Contrary to Bush's insinuation, the ACLU does not oppose movie ratings as guidelines for parents. It opposes rules, imposed by either the industry or the government, forbidding admission to movies based on those ratings. It believes such mandatory rules interfere with parental discretion. The position on the dollar grows out of zealous concern over the separation of Church and state.

FUELING Bush's attacks on ACLU members is the implication that they must support all its positions—a bizarre accusation against a libertarian organization. Two examples invalidate it. Felix Frankfurter, a member of the ACLU's original board of directors, wrote the angry dissent in the 1943 Supreme Court decision that established that children do not have to say the Pledge of Allegiance in school. And the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts has sued Dukakis numerous times. It currently opposes him on a presumptive sentencing bill, which, according to Executive Director John Roberts, "would send away more people for a longer period of time." Mike Dukakis—too tough on crime?

Thornburgh could easily have pointed out that membership does not revoke the privilege of dissent, although no record of his disagreeing with any board decision exists. Between January 1967 and May 1969, the Pittsburgh chapter took on a series of cases consistent with the ACLU's philosophy. Most of these were the mundane, nickel-and-dime civil rights cases that many consider trivial but the ACLU treats like SALT negotiations. Others were more sensational, involving the sorts of issues that expose the group to charges of liberal bias.

During Thornburgh's tenure, the Pittsburgh chapter often arranged representation for conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War. Other frequent clients included victims of police brutality and students protesting the dress codes at their schools. When 86 girls from South Hills High School, all members of Students for a Democratic Society, were charged with inciting to riot after a rally in which they yelled, "Kill the pigs!" the ACLU took the case. When a woman who worked for the public schools was fired for refusing to take a loyalty oath, the ACLU again stepped in.

In 1969, with Thornburgh still on the board, the Pittsburgh ACLU went looking for a client to challenge a school administration that had ordered teachers to lead their students in prayer. They found a student brave enough to face schoolmates' abuse and successfully fought the rule. In 1967, when students at Kiski High School were punished for refusing to salute the flag, the board came to their defense.

In his statement, Thornburgh essentially apologized for a record of which a principled conservative should have been proud. This record depicts him risking the appearance of a liberal to defend civil libertarian principles. Sadly, 20 years later, he is willing to sacrifice principle for appearance. Similarly, a recent call to Democratic Senator Dennis

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DeConcini's office to confirm his membership in the ACLU produced a reluctant confession—and a laundry list of conservatives whom the organization has defended.

In the atmosphere of this campaign, respected men have choked on their own associations rather than risk the baiting of the malicious and the misinformed. What better demonstration could exist of the need for the ACLU? Extremism in defense of liberty, George Bush should remember, is no vice.

JAMES BENNET

Jim Baker, America's most overrated man.

MR. SCHMOOZE

THERE'S NOTHING SUBTLE about Jim Baker's sense of timing. He knew he'd be quitting as treasury secretary to take over as chairman of George Bush's presidential campaign. But as Bush floundered in the late spring and early summer, Baker delayed the switch. Republican fears of losing the White House mounted. By mid-August, when the Republican National Convention began in New Orleans, the vice president had fallen 17 points behind Michael Dukakis in the CBS/*New York Times* poll. Bush, once a strong favorite to beat any Democrat, was now a beleaguered underdog. Baker was ready to move.

He signed on as campaign chief the day the convention opened. Within a few weeks, Bush was eight points ahead of Dukakis, and the kudos began rolling in. "Campaign officials and other Republican strategists cite Mr. Baker's presence as a key factor in the vice president's recent surge ahead of his Democratic opponent," said the *New York Times*. The *Wall Street Journal* gushed that the Bush campaign became a juggernaut once Baker "arrived last month to head the vice president's effort." Not to be outdone, *Time* declared that since Baker took over, "The Bush forces have consistently outflanked, out-thought, and outfoxed their Democratic rivals. . . . Baker, 58, has played a crucial role in reviving Bush's once listless campaign with cool efficiency and uncanny political instincts."

Those are not everyday accolades. But the point is they are almost entirely undeserved. The convention was always going to give Bush a boost, whether Baker was on board or not. Republican conventions, shrewdly staged to appeal to the TV audience, always aid the party's presidential candidate. Bush added to this by giving the best speech of his career. It was written by Peggy Noonan, a former White House speechwriter. Bush's delivery was dramatically improved, thanks to arduous coaching by media consultant Roger Ailes. Meanwhile, Dukakis began to wilt under attacks on his prison furlough program and his 1977 veto of legislation requiring Massachusetts teachers to lead their classes in the Pledge of Allegiance. These issues were shoved onto the election agenda by Bush campaign manager Lee Atwater and pollster Robert Teeter, not Baker. All Baker did was show up at the right time.

James A. Baker III has the most bloated reputation in American politics. He is a skilled campaign operative, like scores of others. He was an excellent White House chief of staff in Reagan's first term and an adequate treasury secretary in the second. But the press, Congress, and even many Democratic politicos regard him as a wonder of nature—a brilliant strategist, a legislative genius, an economic wizard. He is none of these, and to his credit he doesn't claim to be. But he has mastered the cynical trick of identifying himself with successes and dissociating himself from blunders. Guess who among Bush aides has let it be known that he wasn't for Dan Quayle as Bush's running mate? That's right, Baker. He was for Bob Dole. And guess who thought Bush's trip to a flag factory was excessive? Baker again.

Baker's most important conquest is the Washington press corps. When Donald Regan replaced Baker as White House chief of staff in 1985, he told a group of Republicans he was "appalled" to discover how much time Baker spent with reporters and columnists. It was time well spent, as Regan learned the hard way. Regan kept reporters at arm's length and was peppered with unflattering stories, including an erroneous *Newsweek* cover piece that said Regan masterminded an Iran-*contra* cover-up. The same reporters treat Baker as the man who does no wrong. In its October 3 cover story on the presidential race, *Time* called Baker "the rare towering figure" among campaign aides. Baker's flubs and flaps are ignored or forgotten by the press. In extolling Baker's performance at Treasury ("a dominant international presence"), Hobart Rowen of the *Washington Post* wrote last August, "Over the 7½ years of the Reagan administration, he was untouched by scandal."

Not quite, Hobart. In 1983 the White House was struck by a scandal known as Debategate. The briefing books prepared for Jimmy Carter for his October 1980 debate with Reagan had mysteriously fallen into the hands of Reagan's campaign team, it was learned. Baker was implicated, and he admitted having seen the documents fleetingly. He said William Casey, who was Reagan's campaign manager and later CIA director, had given them to him. Casey denied it. A low-level campaign aide, however, told a House subcommittee that he had repeatedly made copies of the documents at the request of Baker's office. There the story died. Congressional and FBI investigations were stymied by contradictory accounts by campaign officials. And the press quickly lost interest. But imagine if the chief suspect had been Edwin Meese, then a White House counselor and no chum of reporters. Would the press have abandoned the chase so readily? Not a chance.

Baker has limited press immunity. He is one of the few political figures to whom reporters give the benefit of the doubt. How did he achieve this? He did it by perfecting the Washington Schmooze, the fail-safe system for neutralizing the press. Why others don't adopt the same game plan for dealing with the press, I'll never know. Wooing reporters is easy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

First, you have to be accessible, and Baker is. As Reagan's chief of staff, he met regularly with reporters (newsmagazines every Thursday, etc.). But just meeting with reporters isn't enough. You've got to tell them something they can use. "Reporters are always nicer to you if you're a source," says Lyn Nofziger, a former Reagan aide (currently awaiting sentencing for violation of the Ethics in Government Act). "Baker is one of the world's great leakers of all time." Meese was the opposite. No matter how much turmoil there was at the White House, Meese insisted things were fine. Reporters referred to him disdainfully as "Good News Ed." Baker also has the right traits for snowing reporters. He is extremely amiable, has an irreverent sense of humor, and genuinely likes many reporters. Sometimes he overreaches. After the first Bush-Dukakis debate he told Peter Jennings of ABC News, "By the way, I thought you won on the panel going away." Baker knows hundreds on a first-name basis and can recall personal details about many of them. (He calls me "Freddy," a name I've never used, but that's OK.) And Baker isn't a snob. Even when he's with Reagan or some other bigwig, he'll wink, wave, or otherwise acknowledge a reporter who catches his eye. Most important of all, Baker doesn't lie. I've never heard a journalist complain that Baker steered him wrong on a story.

It's practically impossible to resist the guy. I don't know of a single reporter who dislikes him. The result is that Baker's been transformed into the Teflon Adviser, the fellow to whom no blame sticks. Of course, this couldn't have happened if Congress were zinging him. But Baker has charmed Congress too. "He manages to convey a sense that you're an important part of the process," says GOP Representative Richard Cheney. Democrats view him "with awe," says Democratic consultant Greg Schneiders. "There isn't anybody on the Democratic side who is Jim Baker's equal." Mark Siegel, a member of the Democratic National Committee, says he "doesn't know if Baker is overrated, but he's rated high."

A WALK THROUGH Baker's career as a national politician is the best way to judge if he's overrated. Baker came to prominence initially as Gerald Ford's campaign manager in 1976. For a rookie, he did well. He displayed a talent for organizing a campaign operation and running it calmly and effectively. But he wasn't faultless or a genius. Ford lost. After the campaign, Baker was interested in running for Republican national chairman. But party moderates, led by departing chairman Mary Louise Smith, threatened to make an issue out of the Ford campaign surplus of more than $100,000, money that could have been spent in close states. In other words, the moderates said, Baker lost the campaign for Ford by holding back the money. "A case could be made for that," says David Keene, a Republican consultant and friend of Baker.

In 1980 Baker was chairman of Bush's bid for the GOP presidential nomination. *Time*, in its October 3 puff piece on Baker, recounts how he cleverly announced Bush's withdrawal from the race in May 1980 over Bush's own objections. Bush was furious, but this "ultimately helped him win the vice presidential spot." *Time* doesn't mention that Baker's advice may have kept Bush from winning the presidential nomination. Baker figured John Connally, not Reagan, was Bush's chief rival. This was a breathtaking miscalculation. After Bush beat Reagan in Iowa, he and Baker rejected pleas that Bush attack Reagan vigorously in New Hampshire. Instead, Bush coasted, talking about being "up for the '80s." Reagan whipped him 2-to-1. Baker altered the planned strategy to challenge Connally in South Carolina, where the campaign blew a whopping $450,000. Bush finished a distant third (Reagan won handily) and was never again a threat to win the nomination.

After the GOP convention in 1980, Nofziger and Casey traveled to Baker's home in Houston to recruit him for the Reagan campaign, which was stumbling at the time. Baker declined. But weeks later, when Reagan was faring better, Baker signed on. He was advised by an associate not to take a line job for fear he'd get embroiled in lingering feuds among Reagan aides. So he went after the job of debate coordinator. Keene, who'd been his deputy in the Bush campaign, told Baker this was a no-lose position. "If Reagan debates, he wins," said Keene, and the Reagans will love you. Reagan debated and won. Baker won too.

IN 1984 Baker was boss of his first winning campaign, Reagan's re-election. There was no way Baker could have lost that one. But he made a huge strategic mistake, putting on an issueless campaign that guaranteed a landslide. Reagan won 49 states, but no mandate. He was so programmed to say nothing that even in an off-the-record session with hand-picked journalists he refused to discuss issues in any depth. Reagan could have stumped for a spending reduction plan, military aid to the *contras*, social issues. He didn't. "What matters is not whether you got 58 or 62 percent of the vote," says Republican strategist John Sears. "It's whether you have power by virtue of your election. The way you get an edge is to prove you have public support [for an issue]." Reagan's re-election didn't prove that. Congress soon rebelled, and Reagan's second term has been aimless and scandal-scarred, thanks in part to Baker.

In 1980 Baker made a Machiavellian pact with Michael Deaver that brought him to the White House. He didn't want to move back to Houston, and Deaver needed a partner to thwart Meese in controlling Reagan's agenda. Baker proved to be both a good administrator and a deft negotiator with Congress. But he could be bluffed into poor compromises. When Representative Dan Rostenkowski, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, started to draft his own lavish tax cut in 1981, Baker panicked. Reagan had proposed a simple 30 percent cut in individual tax rates, plus a more generous depreciation scheme for business. Rather than fight Rostenkowski, the White House outbid him. A string of special-interest tax breaks—at least $250 billion worth—were added to the Reagan bill. This ballooned the deficit and forced Reagan to accept a tax increase the next year. Baker negotiated a deal that was supposed to include $300 billion in spending

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cuts along with the tax hike. To Reagan's chagrin, the cuts never materialized.

Nofziger and other conservative hard-liners contend that Reagan could have gotten more from Congress if Baker had pushed the president's agenda more aggressively. Maybe, but Baker got in trouble when he acceded to Reagan's yearning to slash Social Security. In May 1981 he hastily signed off on a proposal that would have, among other things, sharply curbed benefits for early retirees. Congress revolted, and Baker killed the proposal. But the White House was politically scorched and was afraid of calling again for Social Security cuts. Instead, Baker sheepishly opted for a bipartisan commission that recommended a sizable increase in the payroll tax, the most regressive tax of all. Reagan wound up signing the biggest tax increase in American history.

When he jumped to Treasury in 1985, Baker put himself up for a fresh round of praise, despite a decidedly mixed record. Even TNR swooned (April 21, 1986), dubbing Baker "the most powerful Cabinet member since Kissinger." When Baker stepped down as treasury secretary in August, Peter Kilborn of the *New York Times* was more laudatory yet. "Mr. Baker has enhanced his personal credentials beyond those of a domestic political gamesman," Kilborn wrote, "and he has established himself as the most influential treasury secretary in memory, both at home and on the stage of the world economy."

Baker was influential all right. Infuriated by West German interest rate increases, he threatened to retaliate by letting the value of the dollar plummet. This helped trigger the stock market crash last October. Baker, along with his deputy Richard Darman, has gotten the bulk of the credit for passage of landmark tax reform legislation in 1986. In truth, Regan deserves more credit than Baker. He sparked the drive for tax reform by producing a dazzling proposal in late 1984. Baker was wary, and for weeks the White House declined to endorse that bill or any other. Baker didn't get behind tax reform until he became treasury secretary. By then, the idea had been popularized.

True, Baker had one major success at treasury. Starting in September 1985, he drove down the value of the dollar in concert with the other industrial democracies. This didn't have quite the desired effect. For one thing, it didn't reduce the trade deficit as rapidly or as much as expected. Reagan declared it "very good news" when the trade deficit for July was only $9.5 billion. If it stays at that rate, the deficit for 1988 will be $130 billion. For another thing, the dollar drop didn't ward off protectionist trade legislation, as Baker had hoped. Baker, his political antennae failing him, singled out a provision requiring companies to give 60 days notice to workers before layoffs as the measure on which Reagan (and Bush) should oppose the trade bill. Democrats were delighted at this windfall. They gained a good issue against Bush.

Baker also unveiled his own plan for coping with Third World debt: the Baker plan. The press treated it as new, but it was roughly the same shopworn scheme the United States had been pushing in vain for decades (more bank loans, more dough from the World Bank, more free enterprise). The plan was stillborn in 1985, but Baker wouldn't let go of it. For a fellow slated to be secretary of state in a Bush administration, he showed no diplomatic skill. He publicly trashed other, better plans for dealing with the debt problem, such as Bill Bradley's, which would force the banks that made these irresponsible loans to take a bigger hit.

But at least Baker had a plan for Third World debt. When it came to the deficit, he offered nothing, except faint endorsements of balanced budget and line-item veto amendments that Congress will never pass. Nor did he do anything to prevent what may yet be seen as the biggest financial crisis of the 1980s: the nation's slumping savings and loan industry, which is losing money at a record pace ($4 billion in the fourth quarter of 1987).

In all the praise, Baker is rarely credited for what he's really good at. He's a great manager, part authoritarian, part massager of big egos. He's decisive. And as a Republican pal of Baker puts it, "He has a great instinct for cutting losses quickly. It's very hard to have a two-day negative story with Baker." Fred Malek, the deputy Republican chairman, was jettisoned the same day a story broke about his role, as a White House aide in 1971, in identifying Jews in the Bureau of Labor Statistics. End of story. Baker acted just as swiftly after Bush, in the September 25 debate, left open the possibility that he might favor punishing women who have abortions. First thing the next morning, Baker announced that Bush had thought the matter through and doesn't favor punishment. End of story. In both cases, Baker proved himself an able political operator. But not a genius.

FRED BARNES

1988's safest bets.

SITTING PRETTY

HOUSE ELECTIONS this year recall the old war-movie cliché: it's quiet out there—*too* quiet.

For all practical purposes, they are over. Here are the results: Democrats won a resounding majority again, ensuring a second term as Speaker for Jim Wright. All but a handful of incumbents were re-elected, nearly all by landslide margins of 60 percent or better.

What is happening is a repeat of the 1986 elections, when 98 percent of House members were re-elected, a record. The re-election rate could well be even higher this time. The reason is that lobbyists and their political action committee dollars decide many races long before voters cast ballots.

An example of how this new spoils system works occurred in the Democratic primary in Rhode Island the other day, where the winner was the roguish Representative

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fernand St. Germain, chairman of the Banking Committee. His various financial links to thrift-institution executives, real estate developers, and lobbyists have been under investigation by either the House ethics committee or a federal grand jury almost constantly since 1986. No charges have resulted, but the facts brought to light have been damaging. Yet his latest electoral challenger fell short for lack of money.

St. Germain is as vulnerable as an incumbent can be. In early August Republicans took a poll showing that only 32 percent of the district's voters thought he should be re-elected, while 57 percent favored a "new person." The re-elect number was so abysmally low—anything under 50 percent shows dangerous weakness—that the GOP took another poll a week later, omitting some possibly prejudicial questions about ethics. The result: St. Germain, 39; New Person, 50.

Nevertheless, St. Germain cruised to victory, winning 55 percent of the vote on September 14 over an energetic and politically savvy primary challenger, Scott Wolf. The reason was money. Wolf at first talked about spending $400,000, then scaled down his budget to $350,000, and finally managed to spend only $235,000, of which $24,000 came from his own pocket. Despite ten days of television ads and two weeks' worth of radio, he figures only two-thirds of the electorate had heard of him by election day. "There were still some people voting who probably didn't know who I was," he says. "That's where another $100,000 would have made the difference."

Meanwhile St. Germain spent more than $400,000 (much of which went to pay legal fees) and had $418,000 more in cash on hand, ready to spend if Wolf got too close. Special-interest money made the difference. Wolf raised two-thirds of his money from Rhode Islanders, while St. Germain got at most four percent from home-state donors. The incumbent got 58 percent of his money from PACs and almost all the rest from out-of-state lobbyists, bankers, real estate developers, insurance executives, and Wall Street types.

SO FAR this year only one incumbent has been beaten in a primary: freshman Representative Ernie Konnyu of California. A few inept or unlucky House members might yet fall in November, but in all probability no more than a half dozen, if that. A total of eight incumbents were defeated in 1986, two in primaries and six in the general contests.

Everywhere challengers now face such long odds that far fewer of them are running; 42 percent fewer than the number in 1984, according to the Federal Election Commission. Here's another indicator: Ronald Reagan is attending a Washington reception on October 3 to attract PAC money for Republican House members whom the party considers to be in some danger of losing. There are only 15 of them; invitations to a similar Reagan event two years ago listed 24.

Patrick Swindall, a Georgia Republican, earned a place on the endangered list by getting caught in a sting operation negotiating with an IRS undercover agent for an $850,000 loan of laundered drug money. The ethics committee is investigating that indiscretion. Still, his chances of losing probably aren't much worse than 50-50.

But some other GOP members once thought to be in big trouble seem to be doing pretty well. Reagan loyalist John Hiler of Indiana (whom TNR readers will remember as the subject of a cover story, "The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Congressman" by Fred Barnes, February 15) is locked in a rematch against Tom Ward, a country lawyer who came within 47 votes of defeating him two years ago in a marathon recount. That was the closest election of the year because a flat-footed Hiler didn't take Ward's poorly financed campaign seriously and failed to respond to a flurry of negative Ward commercials attacking him during the closing days of the campaign. This year Ward has plenty of money, but the incumbent is alert and campaigning hard. Local sages favor Hiler to win.

Democratic incumbents are pretty safe too, if money is any indication. All GOP challengers combined had a little over $1 million in their campaign accounts at last report on June 30, while Democratic incumbents had $49 million. Among the few seriously threatened Democrats is freshman Representative Elizabeth Patterson of South Carolina, running a poorly organized campaign against one of the GOP's best House candidates, Greenville City Councilman Knox White. In North Carolina, Representative Stephen Neal is threatened by a Republican candidate, tobacco heir Lyons Gray, who is capable of financing a good portion of his campaign from his own pocket.

THERE ARE others in both parties who could be beaten, and there will surely be some surprise defeats as always. But 1988 is remarkable mostly for who isn't vulnerable. By any traditional measure, for example, Democratic Representative Tom McMillen of Maryland should be hanging on by his fingernails. He squeaked into office for the first time in 1986 by a margin of 428 votes. A Republican held his Tory district easily for 14 years before retiring, and Walter Mondale polled only 40 percent of the presidential vote there in 1984. Yet McMillen finds himself practically in a walkover for re-election; the GOP's candidate is an upholsterer who won the Republican primary after announcing he was quitting the race. He had raised less than $5,000 at last report.

McMillen uses the advantages of office uncommonly well. He has 20 staff employees, half of them working in three Maryland offices. They busy themselves scaring up federal grants for local officials, setting up town meetings to promote the incumbent (22 of them last year alone), and flooding the district with self-promoting newsletters and bulletins. McMillen sends hundreds of thousands of unsolicited mailings to voters using the congressman's frank, the ancient privilege of putting his signature in place of a stamp.

House staff and mail soared in the 1960s, and as a result House re-election rates have dropped below 90 percent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only once in the last 20 years. Now in the 1980s McMillen and his fellow incumbents are exploiting a new perquisite of office: PAC money. McMillen raised $287,000 from PACs in his first 18 months in office, much of it from some of the business groups that backed his fallen Republican opponent in 1986. With no serious opponent to worry about, he has used the PAC money to help repay $77,000 of the $110,000 in personal debt he incurred during his 1986 campaign. If he had been put to the test, he easily could have raised more than a half million from PACs and co-opted many potential sources of money for his opponent.

As a veteran incumbent told Democratic Representative David Price shortly after he won his first House election two years ago, "The two best friends a congressman has [are] Mr. Frank and Mr. PAC." Sure enough, Price the incumbent has already raised far more money from PACs—$270,000 at last report—than he did as a challenger. His total humbles the puny $19,250 raised from PACs by his GOP rival, Tom Fetzer, despite the Republican's strong ties to Senator Jesse Helms and ideologically conservative PACs.

A House incumbent's official staff and mail equal at least $1 million in campaign funds over a two-year election cycle. Add to that the leftover campaign funds that most incumbents carry forward from one election to the next, and the special-interest money that almost any seriously threatened incumbent can raise if needed, and a challenger now begins at least $1.5 million in the hole before he or she raises the first nickel in campaign funds. Frequently the total is even higher: at last count three House members had more than $1 million in their campaign bank accounts, and 40 had more than $400,000. Few of them had any serious opposition, and several have no opponents at all.

The financial barrier to challengers increases with each passing election. And, perversely, the more secure incumbents become, the more PACs give to them. Incumbents got 85 percent of the PAC donations so far in this election.

House members don't have life tenure yet, but they have the next best thing. A few weeks ago the passing of Representative John Duncan of Tennessee made him the sixth member of the 100th Congress to die in office. So the score so far is Voters, 8; Death, 6.

STILL, it's wrong to think of incumbents as being part of an American House of Lords. It's more like Tammany Hall. The House is a political machine where special-interest money and political technology jelled into a new spoils system during the 1980s. As the old Tammany boss George Washington Plunkitt said at the turn of the century: "There is more than one kind of patronage."

The old urban bosses handed out patronage in the form of public jobs and petty favors for constituents; today's lawmakers deal out tax breaks, grants, subsidies, and permissive regulation of commerce. The old bosses took their reward directly in votes and election-day labor, while today's congressmen reap their tribute as special-interest campaign donations, which they translate into votes through purchase of polling, hired consultants, computer-driven mail, and broadcast advertising. Tammany ruled New York City, but this machine straddles the nation.

The labor movement invented PACs during World War II to get around a federal law banning contributions of union dues money to congressional or presidential campaigns. But today it is business PACs that dominate, largely because Republicans pushed hard for their formation and growth during the 1970s. Ironically, Republicans are now the PAC system's victims. Labor still gives 95 percent of its PAC funds to Democrats. And businessmen mostly turn over their PAC money to their Washington lobbyists, who have proved to be far more interested in buying access to incumbent lawmakers than in promoting any Republican dreams of a political realignment.

SADLY, attempts to reform the system have so far been off the mark, and failed miserably. In this Congress Senate Democrats mounted a record seven cloture votes trying to pass a bill that would have imposed spending limits on congressional campaigns. They were beaten back each time by determined Republicans, who correctly noted that spending limits are nearly impossible to enforce and would only harm challengers' chances even if they could be made to work. The modern reality is that successful campaigns cost lots of money, and enacting spending limits can't change that. Real reform will require finding new ways to finance campaigns, and getting more money to challengers.

But there is reason to hope for action next year. Many lawmakers say they are exhausted by the constant pressure to raise the money that keeps them in office. House Democratic Whip Tony Coelho, who happily exploited the PAC spoils system during his six years as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, has been collaborating with Common Cause in the drafting of reform bills that would restrict PAC donations. And more recently, a surprising number of Republican lawmakers are belatedly coming to realize that both the nation and their party would be better off if PACs were outlawed entirely. Just last month Republican Senator Alan Simpson of Wyoming said that as part of broad, bipartisan reform, "I'd even get rid of PACs. I don't have any problem with that."

A Simpson-Coelho bill? Perhaps another PAC-financed 98 percent landslide will shame the House into considering such a measure.

BROOKS JACKSON

Brooks Jackson, a Washington reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, is the author of *Honest Graft: Big Money and the American Political Process*, to be published by Knopf in October.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Gorbachev-Stalin leadership struggle.

GIVING UP THE GHOST

BY ROBERT C. TUCKER

VISITING MOSCOW in June 1988, one found citizens speaking up under the dispensation of *glasnost*. High among the questions being debated were two: What happened in Stalin's time, and was it the right way to build a socialist society when he led the country into a revolution from above in the 1930s that reshaped Lenin's order into a totally state-regimented system?

The anti-Stalinist viewpoint was much in evidence. The big Rossia movie house on Pushkin Square in central Moscow was showing a new film, *The Cold Summer of 1953*. It is set in a Siberian village a few months after Stalin's death. A gang of recently amnestied common criminals, armed with guns, takes over and terrorizes the village until two ex-political prisoners of Stalin's Gulag, now living there as exiles, overcome them in a shoot-out. The Stalin-era political prisoners are the film's heroes. The audience seemed fascinated, and some even wept.

Out on the square afterward, in the twilight of a late Moscow summer evening, crowds milled around Pushkin's statue. One group surrounded persons gathering signatures on a petition to the Supreme Soviet to create a fund for contributions for a monument—along with an information and research center, archive, museum, and library—to Stalinism's victims. This citizens' initiative by an informal group called Memorial in effect proposes a museum of the Stalinist holocaust of Soviet people.

Similar events were occurring elsewhere. On June 14 a public meeting in the Estonian town of Tartu commemorated a Stalinist mass atrocity, the arrest and deportation of 10,000 people on June 14, 1941, in then recently occupied Estonia, and proposed that Stalinism be declared a crime against humanity. The signatures campaign went on in 30 Soviet cities. Memorial submitted its petition, with 48,000 signatures, to the special all-union Party conference held in June. Gorbachev announced at the conference's end that one of its decisions was to build the monument.

Yet Stalin still has defenders. Over dinner one evening at the Writers' Club, Anatoly Rybakov, author of the best-selling *Children of the Arbat*, read aloud to my wife and me an anonymous group's missive threatening to kill him unless, within three months, he would publicly recant his novel's portrait of a villainous Stalin engaged in machinations that led to the assassination of the popular Leningrad Party boss Sergei Kirov in 1934 and the terror that ensued.

What feelings motivate such pro-Stalin manifestations? A short letter published last March in the newspaper *Soviet Russia* suggests an answer. One G. Turetsky wrote in it that there should be a society of defenders of Stalin's name and went on: "Yes, Stalin was responsible for repressions, but Khrushchev and Brezhnev [read: Gorbachev] are responsible for decay of faith in our just cause. So, what's worse—to lose several million people, or to have tens of millions who've lost moral orientation? Russia needs an iron hand for the life span of another generation! Stalin signifies a fanatical sense of the Motherland and a punitive sword!"

Not all of Stalin's many defenders are fanatics like Turetsky. Many are simply citizens whose national pride is linked with nostalgia for Stalin as the rugged leader under whom the country industrialized during the 1930s and fought for its life during the Second World War. For them, the revelations now coming out are a "blackening" of the Soviet past. Some think back on Stalin's time as one when "order" prevailed and prices annually came down in the postwar years (forgetting that this was preceded in 1947 by a revaluation of the ruble that raised prices sharply). They rationalize away Stalin's repressions by believing that he was unaware of them.

I ask Mikhail Gefter, a distinguished, now retired historian, what is happening in his country. He answers in a vivid phrase: "the agony of the Stalinist system." And he is right. The debate about Stalin has to do in large part with his legacy in the present, with the system that Gorbachev and his followers are striving to change in what they call a *perestroika*. Its aim, said Gorbachev to the 5,000 delegates at the special Party conference in late June, is to bring about "a qualitatively new state of our society, a new, humane, and democratic form of socialism."

Rarely has a controversy about the historical past had more momentous bearing on a country's present and future. And rarely has a key word in dispute—"socialism"—been so hard to define, so subject to differing interpretations.

The lack of clarity goes back to Marx and Engels, who came out of the German philosophical tradition that took all history as its province. They scorned as utopians their early 19th-century French and British socialist predecessors who envisaged socialism as a peaceful, community-building project, as in the "villages of cooperation" designed and organized by Britain's Robert Owen. No, they argued, socialism will arise through a violent transnational class struggle in which workers will wrest the plants from

continued on page 33

Robert C. Tucker is professor of politics emeritus at Princeton University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

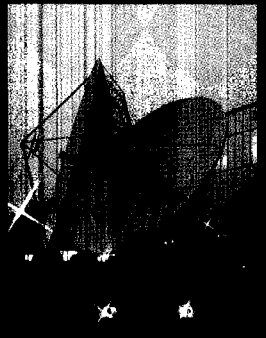
CABLE

You could write about the growth of cable television as a kind of New Age fairy tale; where the broadcast networks are no more than Ugly Stepsisters hissing at their declining fortunes and the cable industry is a savvy Cinderella already at the Ball. Neither side fears the chimes of midnight; it is merely an opportunity to change programming and keep the spectators glued to the pirouettes of the key players on the dance floor. Prince Charming? In this scenario he carries a fiber optic glass slipper, heart pumping from the exertions of the hunt and driven by the romance of revenue.

These days, cable television has it all. More choice. More opportunities. More sophistication, power, and innovation.

Facts should never get in the way of a good fairy tale but in this case they add to the allure. In days so old they are nearly forgotten, America had only three television networks and a handful of far-flung independent stations. A nation where a cable capable of carrying fifty or more television programs passed every home was only a gleam in the eyes of a few true dreamers. But they endured and their vision prevailed.

The legacy is an industry that today vibrates with infectious confidence about its future and its mission. In Wyoming you can watch legislators debate in detail in the nation's distant capital, courtesy of C-Span, order up the Mike Tyson world title fight live on Request television, catch the daybreak with a sports showdown from some faraway country on the glossy ESPN, tune in to The Disney Channel's constantly fresh programming, relax as your kids are left in the care of the thoughtful and inspired programmers at Nickelodeon or appreciate the technology applied by The Weather Channel to bring you forecasts to live by. A whole world is available for Discovery.



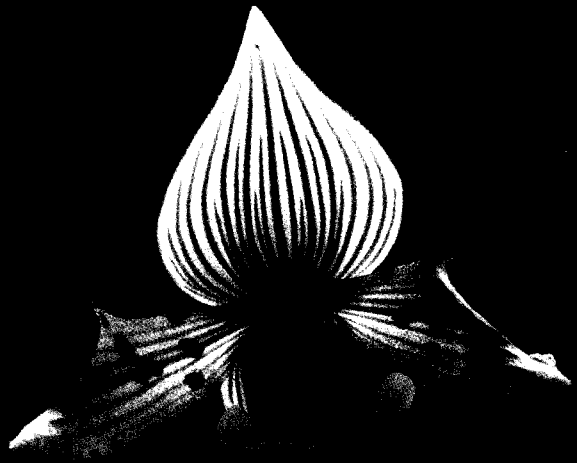
As the broadcast network's viewing figures are eroded daily by the soaring growth of cable-accessed homes advertisers are now actively seeking cable as a cost effective way to deliver their message. This year an estimated $1.5 billion will be spent on cable advertising, a figure up by one-third. That money is being well spent by the cable networks, which are now spending big on co-productions and original programming.

Cable now reaches 52% of American television households, 48 million viewers. It is a disciplined industry, always searching for new, attractive and innovative methods of presenting its incredible diversity of programs. Cable has the time, the experience and the willpower to explore issues. It is a real force in the political landscape, as it is in entertainment, sports, finance and education.

On the following pages we will feature cable's bright stars, the people, the networks, the philosophies that give the industry the dominance it has today.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Join John Hart for **World Monitor** Weeknights at 7:00 pm ET/4:00 pm PT
Repeat broadcast 1:00 am ET/10:00 pm PT



WONDERS NEVER CEASE ON THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL.

Nature. Science and technology. History. World exploration. Human adventure. Enjoy some of the finest documentary entertainment television has to offer. Come and celebrate the wonder of our world. Discover **The Discovery Channel.** Only on cable.

THE Discovery CHANNEL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© The Discovery Channel 1988

CABLE TV

Discovery: Cable's Hottest Property

. . . and viewers discover cable's politics

Like his network, John Hendricks has found his niche in life. Like his network, it is a big niche.

Based in Landover, MD, The Discovery Channel is cable's hottest property; 34 million subscribers on 3,000 cable systems nationwide and a million new subscribers each month.

In the 18 hours each day from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. EST, Discovery thrives on reality programing, non-fiction documentaries on nature, science and technology, history, adventure and world exploration. Its audience is educated and upscale, the kind advertisers could only reach through print in the past.

Says Hendricks: "The broadcast networks discovered that documentaries interfered with audience flow. People who had been viewing a documentary abandoned their sets because they didn't want to watch a sitcom. With us, they don't have to abandon their sets."

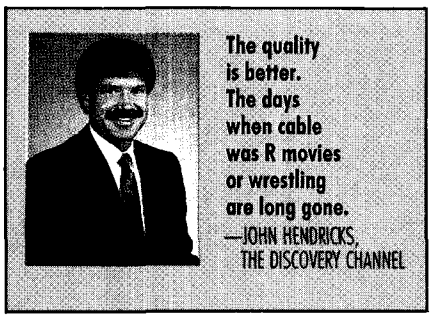
Mr. Hendricks came up with the concept for TDC in 1983. In one sense it could be defined as broad narrowcasting, specialized but not TOO specialized.

"If ESPN had, say, concentrated on just tennis or Ted Turner's CNN on some narrow definition of news, they would have their niche—but it wouldn't be enough to support them. The same with us: if we were just science or travel we would not be the success story we are."

Until Discovery was launched in 1985, MTV had claimed the fastest growth rate in cable history. Hendricks modestly maintains that much of that success can be attributed to the fact he came into the industry as an outsider, not knowing the pitfalls. He knows them now, but is not deterred from thinking about launching another channel, or acquiring one if the figures add up.

Along the way his executives have searched worldwide for their programing: now they are financing co-productions with organizations like the BBC. Hendricks maintains that in five years Discovery's schedule may be 50% acquired programs, 50% produced by themselves.

"The quality is better," he says, "we can influence the product so that it will appeal more to our audience. The days when cable was R movies and wrestling are long gone. Cable system operators find they can overcome resistance to cable by non-subscribers when they show them output like ours."



That output includes award-winning programs like "Russia: Live From The Inside," 66 hours of satellite coverage from the Soviet Union. Events like this fall into Mr. Hendrick's plan for his network to be flexible enough to be interesting, while maintaining a dependable full niche service.

CABLE'S POTENTIAL

Mr. Hendricks is just 38 years old and his passion for cable and its potential is shared by someone just a little older. Ralph Baruch migrated to the United States in 1940 when he was 18. More than a decade later William Paley had singled him out as a protege at CBS, which he left in 1971 to form Viacom, one of the most powerful companies in broadcasting and syndication. Now as a senior fellow at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University he is America's leading advocate of cable and chairman of the National Academy of Cable Programming. Cable, he points out, is not bound to reach for the widest possible audience at all times. So it can provide quality. An O'Neill drama on one network, a symphony concert on Bravo, a Broadway musical somewhere else.

"The standard of programming is excellent, often exceptional across a wide and varied range."

Cable grew because the method of distributing television programs in this country changed. For a generation the three big broadcast networks paid millions of dollars each year to AT&T for terrestrial distribution of their programs. But cable's pioneers realized they could satellite their product across the country, bypass that whole system and still make a profit.

And from industry colleague Brian Lamb, Chairman of C-Span: "For 35 years everything that went on television had to go through three companies in New York City. That created frustration. It took a long time to break that open."

He is still annoyed that while an international satellite was operational in the early sixties it took another twelve years before the domestic satellite could be used by the cable industry.

"There was no excuse for that. When it did happen people who had dreams of using television for things other than mass programming could begin to see a way of getting things to happen."

Mr. Lamb was one of those people. The result was C-Span, (now in 38 million households) created in 1979 by the cable television industry as a non-profit network to provide live coverage of the House of Representatives. In 1986, C-Span II (14 million households) began cablecasts of live sessions of the Senate and created addicts all over the country. Frank Zappa is a fan. So is the President.

On any given day C-Span will cover anything from five to twenty-five events; making independent decisions, involving voters in talkback sessions, letting constituents see how the business of government is carried out.

In one sense there is now no hiding place for lazy representatives: back home their constituents can see—or not see—their contributions. Calling his network "an open pipeline" Brian Lamb is now thinking about pioneering coverage of the Federal Court system and even of including coverage from Britain's House of Commons and Australia's Federal Parliament in Canberra when it is available.

C-Span's basic mission though is American politics in its many forms and it will never substantially deviate from that. To the relief of viewers who watch, on average, 20 hours of the network each month it provides the kind of education you miss when political coverage is nothing more than a series of news bites, polls and quick views of the candidates.

By letting their cameras roll, C-Span lets the full story be told, without editorial interference. And the viewer can make his or her decisions.

CNN is doing it another way: sustained in-depth reporting of national and international news, with a unique ability to go live to a big story anywhere in the world and stick with it for as long as necessary. 24 hours a day of comprehensive coverage, now also available

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Town Hall for the Nation

There is nothing quite like it anywhere in the world. A television channel that transforms the nation into an electronic town hall. The only source of complete televised sessions of Congress. A network that airs every word of a presidential candidate's speech. Where the only commentators are its viewers. And, best of all, it's a public service provided by private industry—the American cable television industry.

C-SPAN
AMERICA'S NETWORK

C-SPAN is available on cable systems nationwide.
For more information phone (202) 737-3220.

in Europe, Australia and Japan.

The key: experienced journalists and producers with the airtime to report a story the way it should be reported. At the Democratic and Republican conventions, CNN attracted considerable credit for its coverage.

Anchor Mary Alice Williams has been with CNN from its inception: like many others at the then fledgling network she had been hired because of impressive journalism credentials in the U.S. and overseas. Now a Vice President, she declares: "Gavel to gavel coverage does not mean abdicating editorial responsibility. We highlight, we explain, we report based on knowledge and experience."

As a philosophy, it works.

Near the end of one convention, as the quality of CNN's coverage became clear to everyone involved, one broadcast network journalist told her, with the weariness of someone who could no longer hold back a tide: "We are passing the torch to you." That is a message more and more viewers had already understood.

DELIVERING A PROMISE

News and politics aside, cable also grew under the Reagan administration because of deregulation and people like former Federal Communications Commission Chairman Mark Fowler.

Now a Washington D.C. media analyst and consultant Mr. Fowler maintains that cable is a real player, just by definition, in the political process and will become a stronger player as the years pass. "Cable has been one of the technologies that through deregulation has begun to deliver on its great promise."

His verdict: the old days before deregulation were really the bad old days and cable should be free to do even more. That confidence about cable's capacity to perform he calls The Popcorn Principle. Essentially it is this: there was a time when everyone was convinced that the only way to create popcorn was by using oil. Now you can do it easier and cleaner by using hot air.

Mr. Fowler is convinced that the dynamism exhibited by the cable industry today would be even more effective if the market was totally free. Cable would respond intelligently, and with common sense.

PAY-PER-VIEW

The market is already expanding viewing options for consumers and revenue opportunities for operators and suppliers with its own system, pay-per-view.

Leading the response is Request Television, headed by 46 year old Jeffrey Reiss, one of the industry's best innovators.

He had already helped found Showtime and the Lifetime channels when he saw the potential in pay-per-view. In existence experimentally since 1951 it was only in 1985 that the service could be taken nationally.

Moonstruck and Broadcast News: on Request Television

Request beams movies, concerts and sports events to cable operators coast-tocoast who deliver it on scrambled channels to homes with addressable units. Viewers telephone the company with their request for a specific show, the channel is descrambled and the charge, usually $4or $5, appears on their monthly account.

The movies from Request are accessible around the time of their video release, with nine major Hollywood studios among those making their films available.

Mr. Reiss:"We are just beginning to scratch the surface of the possibilities of pay-per-view. Cable is a flexible and dynamic medium, pay-per-view is at the revolutionary edge of that medium".

On the issue of pricing, Mr. Reiss says a Broadway hit showcould be offered for, say, anything between $20 and $40. Right in your own home. Go there in person and you'll likely buy dinner for two, pay parking, pay tickets and extras.

"It is an enjoyable and affordable way to experience the best of Broadway. And if you really like the show then you can always go and see it. This could be the best way to sample it." Having already started two networks, the smart money is on Mr. Reiss to repeat that success. The cable industry continues to look to the future.

"We think the next big revolution in home entertainment will occur from new forms of programming that we develop. We are already creating the largest electronic theater in the world."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PROGRAMS

Responsibility in programming is not confined to news. Neither is innovation.

On Tuesday November 22, Arts & Entertainment Cable Network will screen an unprecedented six-hour historical coverage of NBC's coverage of President John F. Kennedy's assassination.

A & E will interrupt its regular programming at the same moment the NBC newsroom broke into its schedule 25 years ago with the news of shots fired at the presidential motorcade in Dallas. A & E will air the special without commercial interruption. These newscasts have never been seen in their entirety since the day JFK was assassinated.

Featured during the six hours will be comments from Former President Dwight Eisenhower, Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and many other world leaders. To preserve this historic television event with all its authenticity, A & E has asked its affiliates not to sell local advertising time during the telecast.

A study guide to accompany the program will not only augument the program itself but will place it in historical perspective; history teachers in more than 15,000 high schools nationwide will receive the guide in their mail.

A & E is also involved in another unprecedented venture, involving a national television network, a local television station and a national syndicator. From November 14 they will premiere the national version of WCVB's award-winning nightly magazine on the American experience "Chronicle."

It will focus on topics from medical miracles and environmental issues to illegal drugs and the homeless as well as in-depth looks at locales ranging from Cape Cod to California to China.

The Discovery Channel is also screening a news show on its network, "World Monitor" described as "driven by news, but something which offers much more than the familiar end-of-the-day business" by its anchor, former NBC News correspondent John Hart.

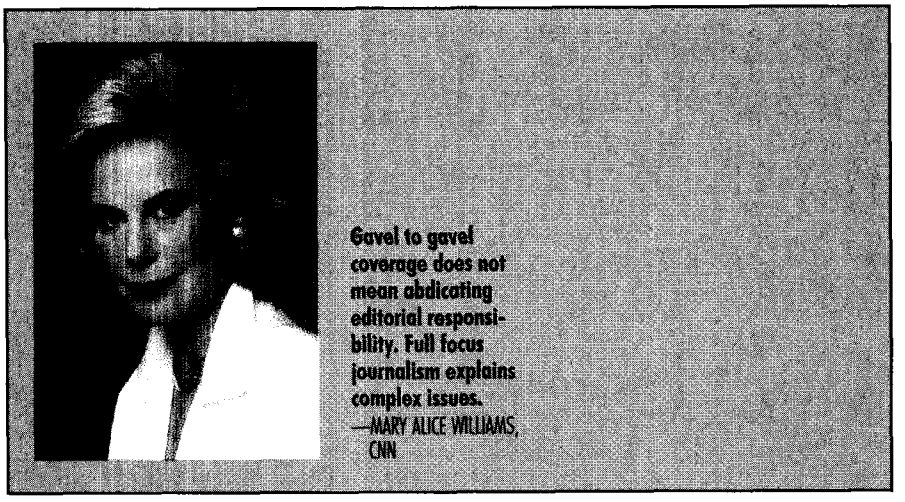
The program is produced by the television arm of The Christian Science Monitor five nights a week, and involve a staff of 100 in Boston and bureaus in London, Tokyo and Washington D.C.

One of the most experienced network heads is Kay Koplovitz, President and Chief Executive Officer at the USA Network.

"Cable programming," she makes it clear, is "light years away from what it was even three years ago. The standard is excellent."

Her own network is ensuring that this fall, cable television is in a position to deliver original and exclusive program choices. All of it part of a $250 million commitment on new series.

USA Network is making two well known shows cable-exclusive: "Miami Vice" and "Murder She Wrote", and is spending $50 million over two seasons to ensure that viewers know where the big name series can be found.



Gavel to gavel coverage does not mean abdicating editorial responsibility. Full focus journalism explains complex issues.
—MARY ALICE WILLIAMS, CNN

That is a trend that will continue as the big entertainment networks flex the muscle they have carefully developed over the years. They are profitable and putting a lot of money back into their product to give real value for money to subscribers.

One major problem now is that with all the choices available to viewers, getting the information to them about those choices becomes more difficult and this is something that is being studied at industry level.

Technology is no longer driving programming. No one in cable makes programs just because the technology is available. But technology is more and more helping viewers anyway. Ralph Baruch: "I can see the day when a viewer returns home from work to see a quality program delivered on fiber optic cable, on a High Definition flat screen that could measure six feet by three and choose the program on the pay-per-view system from a big range." That day is not too far away.

REISS MEDIA ENTERPRISES, INC.

Look to the divisions of Reiss Media Enterprises, Inc. to feed the growth of cable into the 90's and beyond.

REQUEST®

Request Television® The nation's leading Pay-Per-View service.

RME PRODUCTIONS

Film licensing and production of special events for Pay-Per-View.

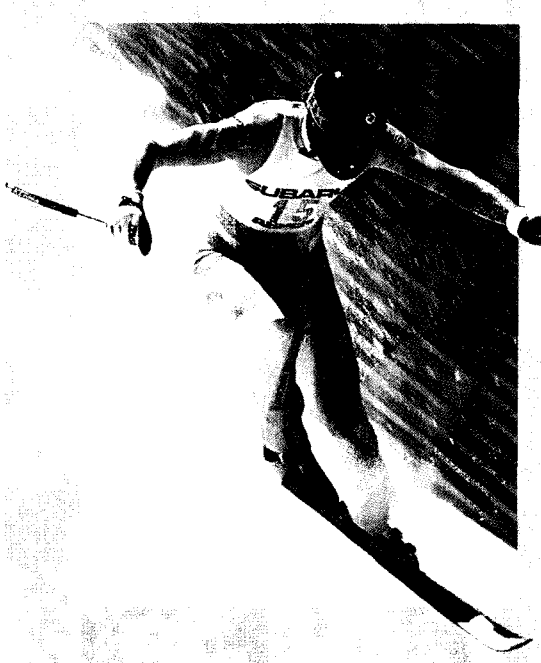
GUEST CINEMA℠

The Hotel/Motel industry's newest source of Pay-Per-View programming.

Request Television and the Request logo are registered service marks of Reiss Media Enterprises, Inc.
Guest Cinema is a service mark of Reiss Media Enterprises, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LAND OF A THOUSAND DANCES.



The ballet of college basketball. The slam dance of the NFL. The tango in Paris called the French Open. The shake, rattle and roll of downhill skiing.

Every sport has an exciting choreography all its own that makes it a thrill to watch. And no one captures the thrill and excitement of sports like ESPN.®

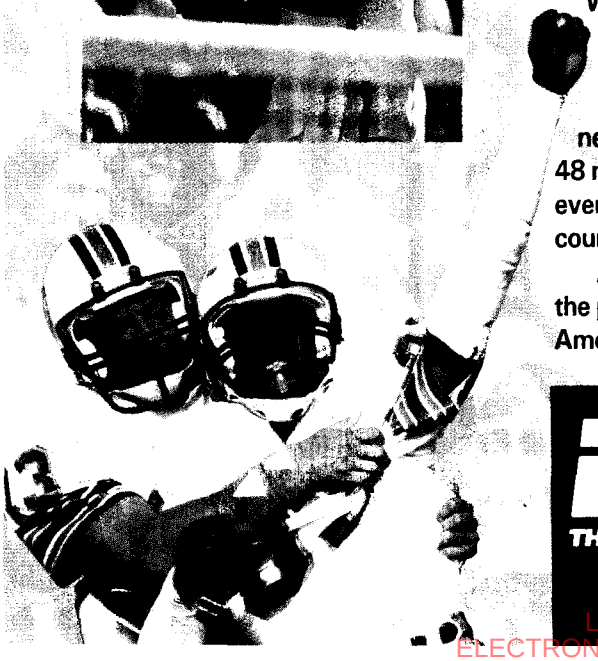
From CFA college football to the NFL. From the Davis Cup to the America's Cup. ESPN offers a greater variety of live, top-quality sports programming than anyone else.

Typically, over the course of a year, we provide over 200 motorsport events, up to 40 professional golf tournaments, more than 200 hours of championship tennis and the best college basketball coverage on television.

And we also keep our viewers informed on what's happening in the business arena with "Nation's Business Today.®" A two-hour business news program televised live every weekday morning from Washington, D.C.

It's that kind of exciting, round-the-clock programming that's made us the largest cable network in America, reaching over 48 million television homes and every major market across the country.

All of which makes it clear, that the place to keep in step with America is ESPN.



ESPN®
THE TOTAL SPORTS NETWORK®

© 1988 ESPN, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CABLE TV

ESPN:
World's Best Sports Network

When Roger Werner took over as boss of ESPN in August, he was returning to the network he helped create.

He'd moved to ABC Television as Executive Vice President in March after six years at the sports network. Now he is back with one overall strategy: to make ESPN the biggest and best sports programming network in the world.

It is already available in 48.8 million homes, that's 54 per cent of American television households.

You can watch ESPN in all 50 states and territories, in Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, in central America, the Caribbean and Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. ESPN programs can be seen also in Australia, Brazil, Japan, China and Western Europe.

In total, 40 countries screen an ESPN product, a remarkable tribute to a remarkable network.

As Mr. Werner explains: "A major objective for the future will be to increase our presence offshore. So far we have only scratched the surface."

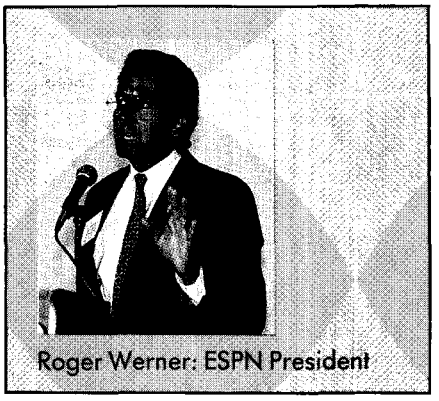
A former McKinsey and Co. consultant, Mr. Werner is credited with developing the network's original business plans and for helping to introduce a second revenue stream in per-subscriber fees.

In terms of value for subscribers, ESPN is one of the best deals around. It has quality, breadth and depth to its programming and much of its programming is exclusive to the network.

Specific targets have been set as part of the plan to sustain improvements in the network's quality. Roger Werner wants to enlarge his company's relationship with the NFL, to get a major cable deal for Major League Baseball and to be in a position to negotiate for cable rights at the next Olympic Games.

For a network not yet ten years old, that is progress. But it is based on confidence in where it is heading and how it will get there.

The kind of innovation, financial commitment and pioneering use of technology that helped keep a percentage of the nation watching yachts race off the west coast of Australia during the America's Cup in Fremantle is used daily in many program areas. In using new technology to cover a new sport, ESPN virtually created an audience for its America's Cup coverage, an audience which stayed to see what else that network delivered.


Roger Werner: ESPN President

Mr. Werner is expanding the network's product line, overseeing a home video business of mainly instructional titles that will eventually expand.

He is also planning the launch of a major national magazine.

Competition? The biggest anxiety is from within the cable industry itself: cable multi-system operators who seem intent on buying programming services or forming consortia which can compete for program rights. This trend has emerged on both the regional and national level.

"Essentially our future competition may well come from our own customers, the cable operators. The implications of that kind of competition are somewhat troubling."

But he is supremely confident about the future of America's biggest cable network. Widely recognized as one of the industry's best executive talents Mr. Werner will take ESPN in the direction which he helped create when he was number two.

He didn't use the analogy, so we will. If there was a Superbowl for networks, ESPN would be there every year.

And it wouldn't be on the losing side.

Shelley Duval: true commitment

When cable achieved 50% penetration of American television households, Hollywood sat up and took notice. And as the numbers climb that interest will grow.

Shelley Duval celebrated that milestone figure of 50% but her involvement in cable is definitely not that of a recent convert. The entrepreneur actress produced a series called Faerie Tale Theatre with Showtime in 1982; it ran for five years before going into syndication. She is also treasurer of the board of governors of the National Academy of Cable Programming.

Now Ms. Duval has created cable history, forming the industry's first production company dedicated to producing high impact first-run programs for cable networks. Called Think Entertainment Inc. it has already demonstrated an innovative and creative approach in programming and a willingness to search for new ways to finance cable shows.

Her partners are four of the big multi-system operators, the companies that sell and provide the distribution for the networks. The Writers Guild strike earlier this year gave Ms. Duval and her partners time to travel and talk to network executives about their requirements. Already they have agreements to produce two series, and are actively discussing several more.

"There is a lot of creative freedom in this industry," says Ms. Duval. "People in this industry have energy, are innovative, and even though they are all in competition there is tremendous camaraderie."

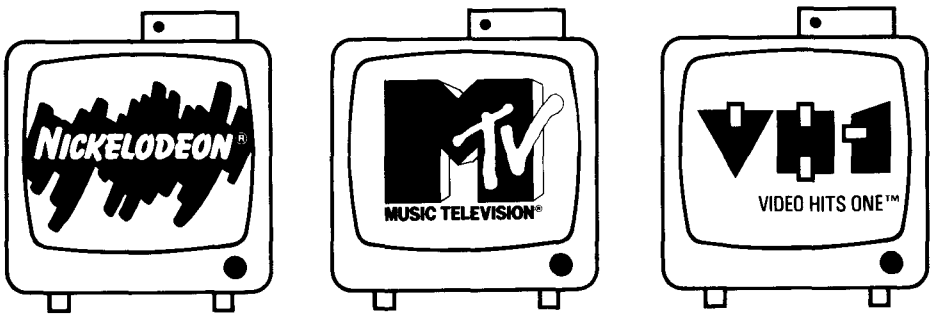
At her Studio City office she describes Think Entertainment Inc. as a programming think tank, something that will produce programs that will attract people to cable because the concept will go beyond anything being produced now, either on cable or broadcast. The company logo is a bowler hat floating in the skies. No impersonal corporate logo here.

"Cable is programming driven, and the programs cable is producing now are more and more compatible with what the broadcast networks are doing. We have quality in this industry. You could nearly say we are entering a new golden age for television, because the concentration of talent in cable is beginning to have a big impact on the output." With the thoughtful and creative Ms.Duval at its head, Think Entertainment is already hinting it could have the biggest impact of all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MTV NETWORKS.

CABLE AT ITS BEST.



©1988 MTV Networks.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CABLE TV

What do kids know anyway? Everything, it seems.

Geraldine Laybourne will not forget her first research session with kids, soon after the now totally successful all-kids network Nickelodeon was launched.

"They hated it," she still says with a shudder. "And they told us why. Bluntly. We came back from that meeting gray faced." Eight years on, Geraldine Laybourne is Executive Vice President and General Manager of Nickelodeon and Nick At Nite, the MTV Networks the kids now call their own. Geraldine Laybourne still attends research sessions and must be among the few network heads who do. "In my job it is vital to listen to what they are saying."

These days kids regard Nickelodeon as "their" channel, the one that understands them. As a network, Nickelodeon learned a lesson from that first research session in 1982: listen to your audience, don't lecture it. Now when children are asked to describe Nickelodeon and its programs they tend to use one word: "my".

Getting there wasn't easy and network executives invested in some serious research on kids' attitudes. Among other things the

nationwide survey conducted by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman Inc revealed:

- 45% of the nation's kids have two working parents
- 24% are being raised in single-parent households
- 65% of 9-17 year olds shop in supermarkets once a week.

"Only one third of our kids live in traditional households," says Geraldine Laybourne. "They cook their own meals after school, do their own laundry, clean house, grocery shop, make their own dental appointments. They are being asked to make more personal decisions about their lives." Nickelodeon, she makes it clear, offers a safe haven for the nation's children, a world where they can be kids and not confront adult situations where they might not have the vocabulary to deal with a problem.

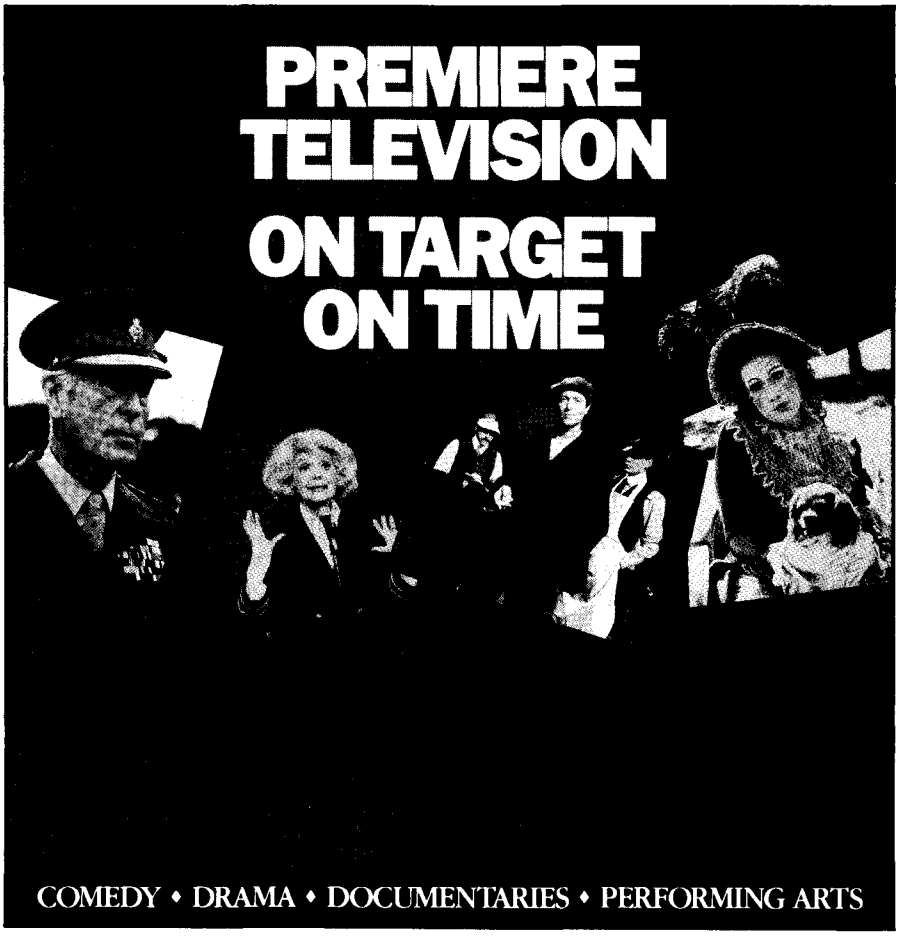
Now programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week the network has 39 million subscribers, nearly 35 million of whom receive Nick At Nite. It doesn't do as much educational programming as it used to because kids wouldn't watch it. What it does do it does exceptionally well. Industry observers all agree that the network has a very distinct personality. In essence, Nickelodeon has created "kiddom" and the feedback from kids and parents has been very positive. It makes its audience feel good about itself, at every age level. And by the way, if you are wondering why we used the word "kid" throughout this feature instead of "children" we had some advice. That's the word the kids themselves prefer.

Nickelodeon learned a long time ago that it pays to listen. Because of that, it developed an audience which listened to what they had to say. You could call it mutual respect, between this country's kids and their network.

Art as Entertainment

When it comes to winning awards for programming excellence, look no further than the Arts & Entertainment network. Thirteen this year, more ACE's than any other basic cable network for the third year in a row.

A&E is owned by The Hearst Corporation, ABC and NBC, offering a daily 24 hour mix of the best in comedy, drama, documentaries and the performing arts. Says Andrew Orgel, Senior Vice President of Programming and Production: "The programming mix is unique. It attracts and keeps viewers." As an image-building network Arts & Entertainment is welcomed by cable operators selling their systems to non-cable households. And as Mr. Orgel points out, the network is making big financial commitments to co-productions, especially with organizations like the BBC. Until 1991, A&E has first refusal rights on all BBC drama, docudrama, comedy, variety, music and art. It will also co-produce 30 hours of drama with the BBC each year, and much more with other international production networks. "Our aim, simply, is to bring the best in television to our viewers and we are already doing that," said Mr. Orgel.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

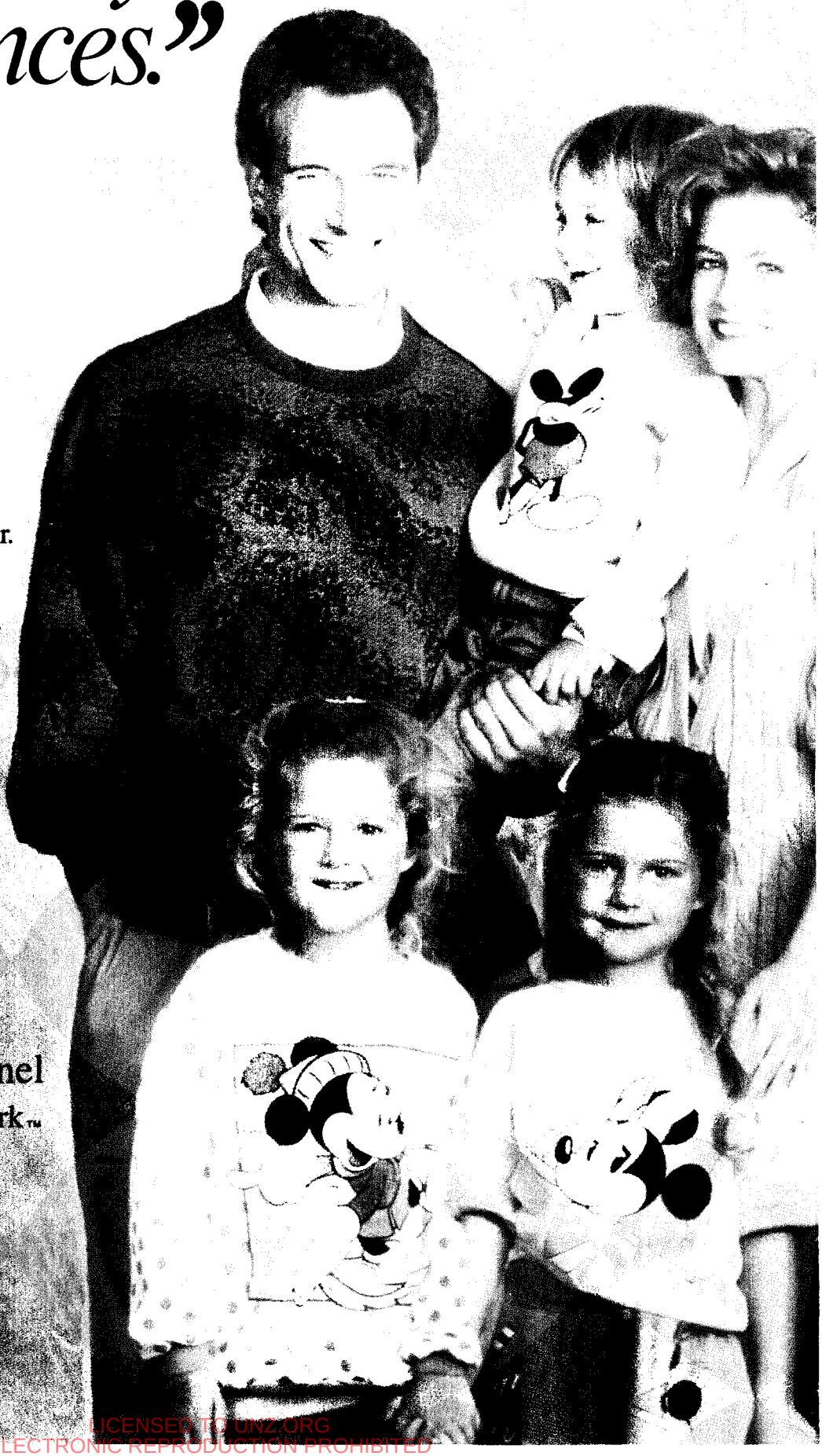
"Our family has its little differences."

Every family does.

That's why there's one thing so many families agree on. The Disney Channel.

There's something for everyone on The Disney Channel. Mornings and afternoons are for kids. Evenings, the whole family can enjoy together. And after 9PM, when the kids turn in, there's even Disney Night Time. Movies, specials, series and miniseries adults can enjoy, every night of the week.

The Disney Channel is the best family TV on TV. The one channel every family can turn to, to settle its differences.



The Disney Channel
America's Family Network™

Subscribe today!
Call 1-800-228-8888.

© 1993 The Walt Disney Company

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CABLE TV

The Disney Channel

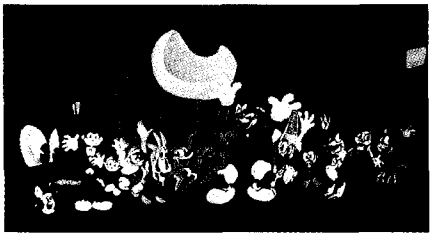
America's Family Network. Three Channels in one.

Both descriptions fit The Disney Channel, the nation's largest and fastest-growing pay service.

It has a tradition it lives to, and a contemporary attitude that ensures its success.

As a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company it can draw on unique programming and one of its special resources is a growing supply of original family programming: about 50 hours a week.

As a family-oriented service it targets and serves different audiences each day. Preschoolers in the morning, pre-teens in the afternoon, various members of the household from 6:00-9:00 p.m., and then adult family members. Network President John F. Cooke is proud of The Disney's Channel's growth, and of the declared satisfaction of his viewers with the programs his channel offers.

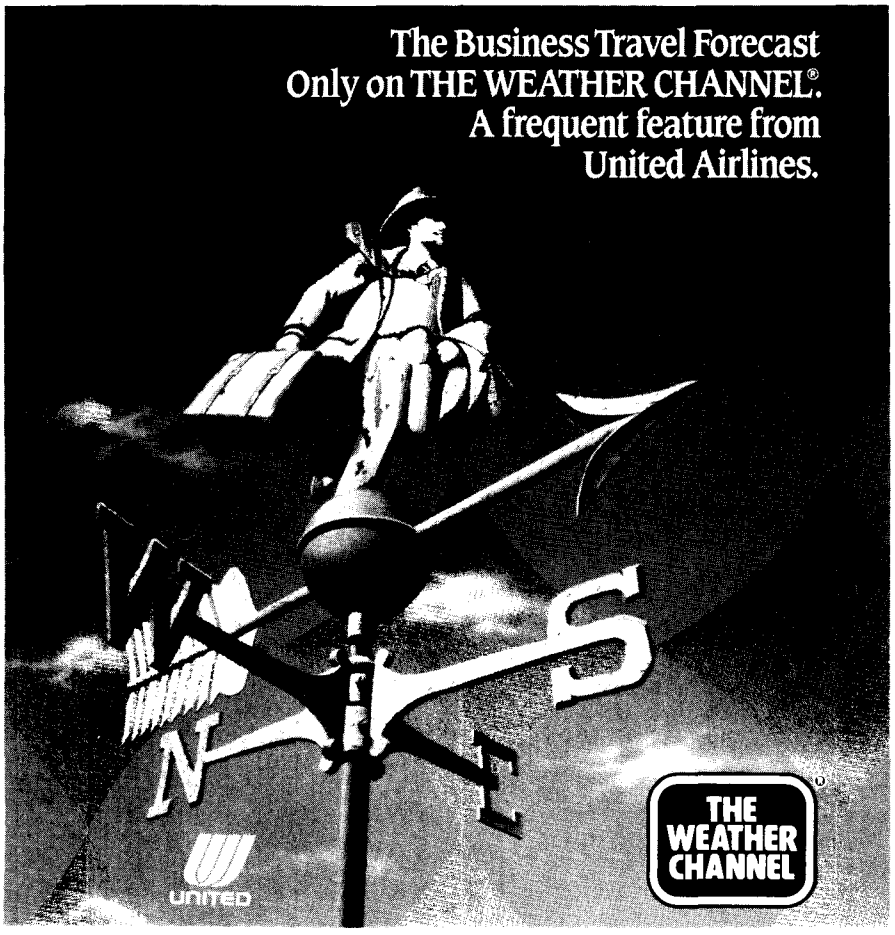


It is a premium television service, featuring original films, specials, series, classic Hollywood motion pictures, films from the Disney library and premiere acquisitions from around the world. As a strong advocate of subscription television Mr. Cooke maintains that the national average payment of $7 or $8 each viewer makes to receive his channel is excellent value for the money.

Viewers are responding. And young viewers will be as fascinated by a new The Mickey Mouse Club as many of their parents were in the 1950s.

"In some ways," says Mr. Cooke, "some, even many, basic values and attitudes have not changed." Produced at the Disney-MGM Studios at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, the series is aimed at being as entertaining and relevant as its predecessor. An innovation this time: young viewers will participate in some of the show's segments and activities by calling a toll-free 800 number, and talking to guest stars, voting in polls and taking part in games. The series will air in early 1989. That, and the screening of three legendary television specials unseen for nearly 30 years are adding to the appeal and popularity of The Disney Channel. Those specials were made by Fred Astaire on videotape, probably the first color videotapes still in existence.

"It is that relationship between our past and our contemporary value we strive for," says Mr. Cooke. To the total satisfaction of his viewers.



And the forecast . . .

They know something at The Weather Channel's offices in Atlanta that doesn't often get mentioned publicly.

At offices in many places on Capitol Hill television monitors are tuned to C-Span or CNN. And The Weather Channel.

"If there is a big storm back home, few representatives would risk not knowing about it," says Mike Eckert, the network's President. This unusual network of 24 hour weather information is attracting worldwide interest and is available in nearly 37 million American homes.

It is a high technology masterpiece, developing systems for simultaneously broadcasting different local reports to 800 "weather zones" around the country. "In one way we satisfy one aspect of the American psyche," said Mr. Eckert, "the 'I want it now' syndrome. Some people can't wait the half hour or hour for a forecast on radio."

With The Weather Channel you get an updated forecast every few minutes, from experienced meteorologists using patented computer graphics that are the envy of everyone in the industry. The future? Mr. Eckert plans to continue investing millions of dollars in viewer research and new technology that will transform, among other things, the way in which the local weather updates are screened. Forecast: barometer steady, excellent corporate weather ahead.

Published by **TC/Press International,** 3207a M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007. Tel: (202) 337-6484.

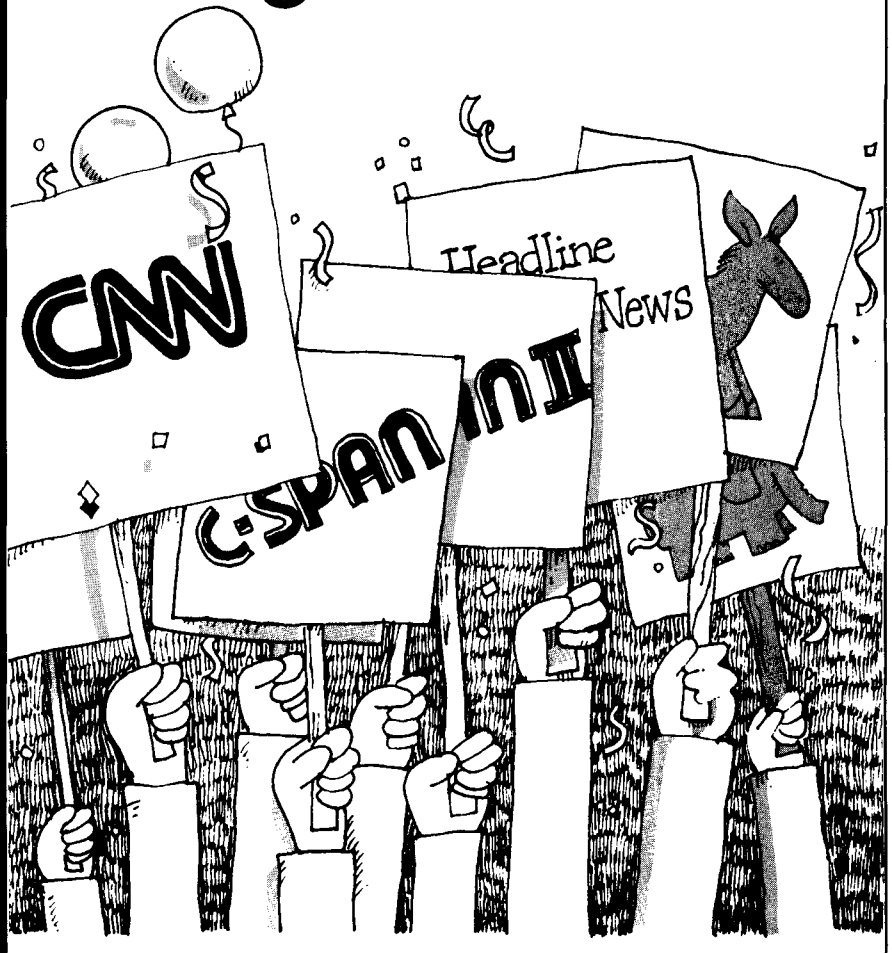
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In 1976 there was ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS

In 1988 there is...

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
ACTS
AMERICAN MOVIE CLASSICS
BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION
BRAVO
THE CBN FAMILY CHANNEL
CINEMAX
CNN
COUNTRY MUSIC TELEVISION
C-SPAN
C-SPAN II
THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL
THE DISNEY CHANNEL
ESPN
EWTN
FAMILYNET
THE FASHION CHANNEL
FESTIVAL
FINANCIAL NEWS NETWORK
FNN: SCORE
GALAVISION
HEADLINE NEWS
HBO
THE LEARNING CHANNEL
LIFETIME
THE MOVIE CHANNEL
MOVIETIME
MTV
THE NASHVILLE NETWORK
NICKELODEON
NICK AT NITE
THE NOSTALGIA CHANNEL
SHOWTIME
THE SILENT NETWORK
SUPERSTATION TBS
TEMPO
THE TRAVEL CHANNEL
TRINITY BROADCASTING NETWORK
UNIVISION
USA NETWORK
VH-1
VISN
THE WEATHER CHANNEL

Cable Television... making TV all it can be.



ncta National Cable Television Association
1724 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036 • (202) 775-3550

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their capitalist owners and set up a short-lived "proletarian dictatorship," after which socialism or communism (terms they used interchangeably) will emerge as history's finale.

And what would this socialism mean? To Marx and Engels it meant the end of economics in a classless, hence stateless, society where freely creative human beings would produce according to their abilities and receive according to their needs. They had no design for socialism as a new kind of economic system. In this sense, they were the most utopian socialists of all.

The problem of socialism's meaning came back to haunt Lenin after his Marxist party of Bolsheviks took power in 1917 and forged a one-party regime in the ensuing civil war of 1918-20. In 1921 they gave up their initial "War Communism," based on rationing, grain requisitioning, and repressive rule, and adopted the New Economic Policy. The NEP restored a money economy, enabled 25 million peasant proprietors to farm their holdings on nationalized land, and gave private enterprising "Nepmen" a free hand in light industry and the service trades. Relative prosperity ensued.

Now Lenin pondered what it would mean for NEP Russia to advance to socialism and decided that learning to work cooperatively was the answer. In a key 1923 essay he referred to the "old cooperators," particularly Robert Owen, as models, and said: "The system of civilized cooperators is the system of socialism." Building socialism would involve a generation-long, party-led educational effort to bring about the "cooperating of Russia." Industrializing would be needed too, partly to persuade peasants to farm cooperatively by providing tractors.

AFTER LENIN DIED in 1924, his program was taken up by a group of Bolshevik moderates led by Nikolai Bukharin and Aleksei Rykov. They became known as the Rights because they envisaged cooperative socialism arising in one country. After allying himself tactically with them to oust the more internationalist-minded Left Opposition headed by Lev Trotsky, Grigori Zinoviev, and Lev Kamenev, Stalin turned against and ousted them from power in 1929 as a "Right deviation" that failed to see the need to build socialism in the one country rapidly. Once in control, he set about abolishing the NEP.

What did Stalin and Stalinism represent? In this scholar's view, he was a Bolshevik of the radical right. Stalinism was an amalgam of aggressive Russian nationalism with the harshly repressive Bolshevism of the War Communist period. Stalin looked to the czarist past for cues to present policy. He found them in the centuries-old heritage of a powerful, centralized, bureaucratic state. His role model was Czar Peter the Great, who in the 18th century tried by a forcible modernizing revolution from above to remake backward Russia into a great military power and expand it into an empire.

So Stalin set about rebuilding a strong centralized Soviet Russian state during a frantic drive to prepare Russia for war under the heavy-industry-oriented Five-Year Plan. To exploit peasant labor for such swift industrializing, he needed to bring the peasants under state control. This he did by terrorizing them to join collectives in which many—rightly—saw a revival of the serfdom from which their forefathers were freed in 1861. Their passive resistance by mass slaughter of their livestock helped bring on the worst famine in the country's famine-plagued history.

Stalin's rule brought into being a bureaucratically administered Total State centered in Moscow. Its command economy operated through huge state monopolies called ministries of iron, coal, etc. Its society was hierarchical: a privileged class of officials at the top under a new czar-autocrat in Stalin's person, a subordinate working class, a reinserfed peasantry, and an ever growing underclass of forced laborers, many deported during collectivization, in a concentration-camp empire in remote areas of the country. In 1936 Stalin pronounced this system basically socialist.

BY THEN older-generation and other Bolsheviks, many of whom remained faithful to Lenin's nonstatist vision of a cooperative socialism, were disappearing, along with large numbers of non-Communists, into prison and the Gulag during the Great Terror detonated by Kirov's murder (for which Stalin was undoubtedly responsible). This huge new wave of repression was presented as a response to an anti-state conspiracy whose ringleaders—Bukharin, Rykov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others—were pressured and tortured into confessions of guilt in show trials staged in Moscow in 1936-38. In fact the only conspiracy against the party-state was Stalin's.

As Lenin's party went down to virtual destruction, there emerged a new, subservient elite of Stalin's own making, typified by rising young apparatchiks like Leonid Brezhnev. Stalin provided it and the younger generation with a reformulated official creed that had a bible in a *Short Course* of Party history published in 1938. The creed's first article of belief was that Stalin's revolution from above had transformed Soviet Russia into a land of socialism. This fusion of Stalin's name with socialism was going to make the task of future reformers very hard.

Anti-Stalin reformism appeared when Stalin's one-time Politburo lieutenant, Nikita Khrushchev, denounced the dead dictator before a closed session of the 20th Party Congress in 1956 for suppressing Party rule in the Great Terror and creating a police-based personal dictatorship. But his speech did not dispute the Stalinist claim that a socialist society was being built in the early 1930s. In the end Khrushchev managed to reform the system only at the apex by abolishing personal dictatorship—so successfully that he himself was peacefully voted out of power in 1964 by the restored oligarchy.

Conservatism took over under Brezhnev. Stalin was honored again in official annals, and the culture of bureaucratic authoritarianism held sway. The country sank deeper and deeper into a morass of careerism, corruption, economic slowdown, environmental deterioration, food shortages, drunkenness, apathy, and passivity among a hope-bereft populace. And on this stagnant, swollen state of Stalinist lineage Brezhnev in the 1970s

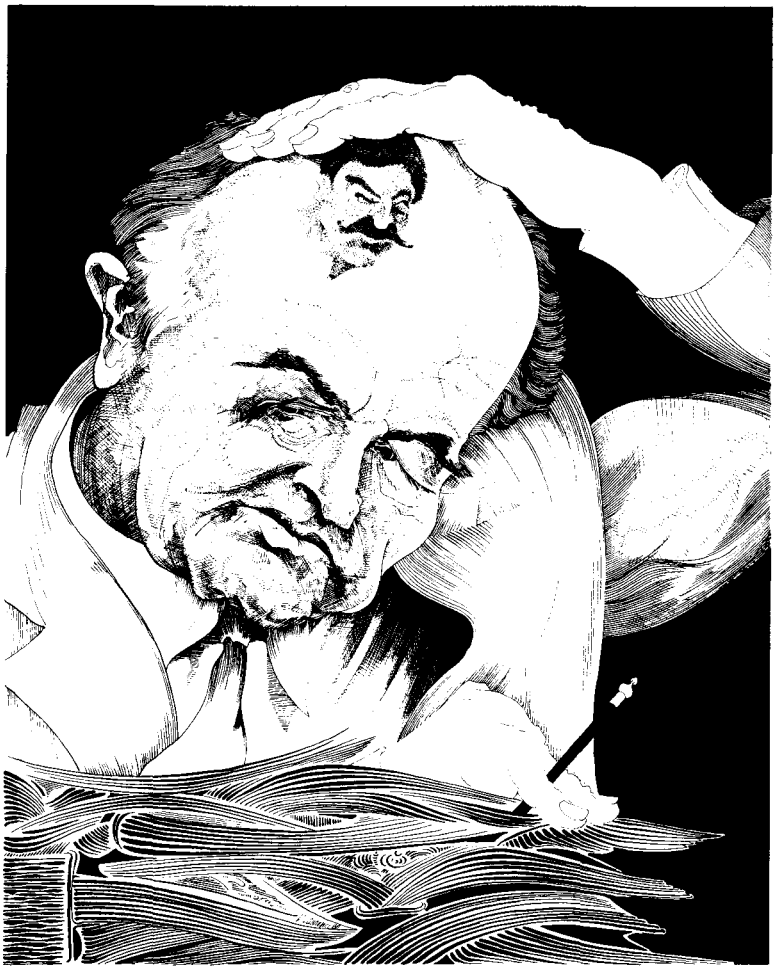
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bestowed the proud title: "Developed Socialism."

That designation went out of currency under Gorbachev, who diagnosed the internal situation as one verging on crisis and prescribed *perestroika* as the remedy. In him the country acquired a leader capable of cutting down the Total State and allowing a civil society to emerge via *glasnost*, with inevitably diverse voices reflecting what he calls "socialist pluralism of opinions." By so summoning society to form a constituency for change, Gorbachev has sought to make a reform program initiated from above into a reform movement supported from below.

The *perestroika*'s centerpiece is economic reform amounting to a neo-NEP under today's very different conditions. This means developing a marketized economy in which plants operate autonomously on the basis of real prices and the ministries lose much of their staff and directive functions; offering scope for small-scale private and cooperative enterprise in the service trades; and moving to decollectivize agriculture by leasing land to families and cooperative groups to farm for profit.

Would not such departures constitute a backsliding from the socialism that the Party is committed to upholding? From the Stalinist viewpoint, they certainly would. So a *perestroika* of historical and ideological thinking has been a necessity of the reform program from the start.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Gorbachev led the way by invoking Lenin's idea of a socialism of cooperatives and encouraging intellectuals to fill in "blank spots" in Soviet history. The historical profession was slow to respond: too many of its members were responsible for blank spots that met the Brezhnevian need for a gilded overview of Stalin's decades in power. A controversy exploded in the press in 1987 when a few iconoclasts, among them the respected 80-year-old war historian Alexander Samsonov, pressed for a new truth-telling history against opposition from still influential figures in the profession. By mid-1988 the Academy of Science's historical institutes, now under newly elected leaders, were moving into a *perestroika* of their own.

Earlier on, the task of filling in blank spots fell to novelists, memoirists, filmmakers, and some among the scholars. Vividly realistic depictions of the horrors of collectivization came out in novels like Boris Mozhaev's *Peasant Men and Women*. Bukharin and the cooperative version of socialism that he upheld against Stalin in 1928 were officially rehabilitated and praised in articles. Memoirs about Stalinist purge victims appeared. So did exposés of men around Stalin like his sycophantic police chief Lavrenti Beria and his purge trial prosecutor and judicial theorist Andrei Vyshinsky.

Such facing of historical facts is necessary for radical reform. For if Stalin's "administrative-command system," as Gorbachev calls it, was at best a "deformed" or "barracks" socialism, then it plainly should be transformed now to make way for a humane socialism with a mixed economy in a politically renovated Soviet system. But by the same token, excavation of the Stalinist past troubles those in the leadership who want to preserve the essentials of the authoritarian party-state setup. They prefer to believe that Stalin built the foundations of socialism, whatever "mistakes" were made in the process, and that the Soviet Union's past achievements are what need stressing. These forces have a Politburo leader in the burly, non-intellectual, 67-year-old Party secretary Yegor Ligachev.

As it became clear that Gorbachev and his followers intended to use the June Party conference to press for reforms of the Soviet political system that would help get the party-state apparatus off the economy's back, battle lines were drawn on high. A document useful for conservative purposes turned up in a letter from a Leningrad chemistry teacher, Nina Andreeva, to *Soviet Russia*. With high-level editorial help it was expanded into a large article and put out on March 13, 1988, while Gorbachev was on a visit to Yugoslavia.

Andreeva protested against the "left liberal intelligentsia socialism" that holds that "what we have built is not proper

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

socialism." She objected to "one-sided assessments of collectivization as an atrocity against the peasants" and to exaggerating the later repressions "out of all proportions." She saw the offspring of "Nepmen" rearing their heads now, spoke darkly of Trotsky and his internationalism as a still dangerous Jewish phenomenon, and demanded recognition of Stalin's "genuine role in building and defending socialism." Granted that his time was harsh, what happened was historically necessary. As for his personal qualities, who now remembers Czar Peter's objectionable qualities in their reverence for him as the leader who made Russia a great European power? In defense of Stalin as another leader in that mold, Andreeva quoted Winston Churchill as saying of him, "He took over a Russia still using the wooden plow and left it equipped with atomic weapons." Her ghostwriters may not have known that the originator of this phrase, later borrowed by Churchill, was a British ex-Trotskyist of Polish Jewish origin, Isaac Deutscher.

THIS ARTICLE'S appearance was a national event—and a crisis for *perestroika*. On returning from Yugoslavia, Gorbachev had no choice but to force a showdown in the Politburo. Then he rallied his forces by publishing in *Pravda* an authoritative editorial reply to the "manifesto of anti-*perestroika* forces" put out in Nina Andreeva's name.

Some people are dismayed, *Pravda* said, by the developing democratization. They are saying, "We're headed toward petit-bourgeois socialism based on commodity-money relations." Replying, the editorial asked what it would mean to "save" socialism now. To preserve an authoritarian system under which bureaucratic ways, corruption, and petit-bourgeois degeneration flourished? No, it argued, the need is to "remove the rust of bureaucratism" from socialism's ideals and cleanse it of everything inhumane. Not jingoism but a constructive form of patriotism is needed. And as for Stalin, the defense of him in *Soviet Russia* ignored the need to judge socialism morally. To those who say that Stalin did not know about lawless acts, "He not only knew about them, he organized and directed them."

This scarcely veiled debate between the reformist and conservative tendencies that coexist now in the one-party regime shows, as nothing else has, how cleavage over present policy is connected with deep differences about Stalin and Stalinism. To justify their position, go-slow reformers and conservatives cling to Stalin's time as one in which socialism was being built. The radical reformers' trump card against them is the historical truth about Stalin as the murderous tyrant that he was and his system as the odious one that it was. They played it to good advantage in the run-up to the June conference.

In May *Literaturnaya Gazeta* ran an advance excerpt of George Orwell's previously taboo *1984*, with an editorial not recognizing the relevance to Stalin's Russia of its portrait of a totalitarian nightmare state ruled by a reclusive, mustached Big Brother. A prominent economist, Evgeni Ambartsumov, wrote in the *Moscow News* that collectivization took a toll of five to ten million victims and called this "outright genocide." An article in the newspaper *Soviet Culture* related an Old Bolshevik's mid-1930s testimony that Stalin, with whom he had shared exile during World War I in the northeast Siberian village of Kureika, gained favor with the local czarist authorities by informing on the Bolshevik exiles' colony—the first confirmation in a public Soviet source of a view long held by some in the West.

On June 13 the U.S.S.R. Supreme Court annulled the sentences and rehabilitated the defendants in the Moscow trials of 1936 and 1937, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Karl Radek. All three of Stalin's great purge trials now stand publicly condemned as the judicial frame-ups that they were. Gen. Dmitri Volkogonov marked the 47th anniversary of Hitler's June 1941 invasion of Russia with a denunciation in *Pravda* of Stalin's blundering refusal to heed advance warnings in 1941 that invasion was imminent. A Moscow radio broadcast revealed part of the staggering cost: almost six million Red army men were taken prisoner, most at the war's start.

AGAINST THIS background Gorbachev opened the Party conference on June 28 with a keynote speech that repudiated Stalinism's legacy of regimentation of society by the state. He proposed reforms of the political system that would bring elements of pluralism into it. But the end of the struggle for change is not yet in sight. The administrative-command system resists its demise. The economic ministries, for example, barred now from controlling plants' operation by giving them obligatory plan targets, have achieved the equivalent by ordering goods in such quantities that the plants have to work at full capacity just to fill their orders. And the goods ordered are not always goods in demand. The past, Karl Marx liked to say, "weighs like an Alp" on the present. Never was this more true than of the country whose revolution took Marxism as its banner.

The change-resistant bureaucratic forces have an ally in the mentality of those who continue to remember Stalin as a great builder of socialism. The medicine of historical truth now being administered to the body politic elicits from a part of it only a cry of pain. It echoes in letters to editors like this one cited by *Soviet Culture* in the Party conference's aftermath: "Stalin is a historical personage on a grand scale. History won't forgive the blaspheming of his name after his death." The Nina Andreevas are numerous, and *glasnost* gives them too the chance to voice their thoughts publicly.

To transform the Soviet system nonviolently—and coercive change would defeat the very idea of Gorbachev's *perestroika*—will take unremitting effort over considerable time. It will take all the leadership capacity and powers of persuasion that Gorbachev and his helpers can muster. And last, it will take something that has been in tragically short supply in Mother Russia's long life: some good luck.

All this can explain the response I had from a well-educated young professional person when, before departing Moscow, I quoted to him Professor Gefter's phrase about the Stalinist system being in its death agony: "Not until I see its corpse will I be at peace." □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Emerging—and Submerging

The hottest subject in the film world these days is the emergence of East Asian films—or, to put it properly, the emergence of Western attention to East Asian films. Since *Rashomon* (1950) Japanese film has had some, though insufficient, attention here; now we are beginning to recognize other countries. The best of the recent Asian films that I've seen (not a great number) is a Chinese production called, discouragingly, *Red Sorghum*.

Red Sorghum
(New Yorker)

Madame Sousatzka
(Cineplex Odeon)

This is a first film by Zhang Yimou, who is well known in China as an actor. It takes place in the province of Shandong in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and the first compliment is that soon after it starts, the odd title becomes not only apt but essential.

A bride-to-be, played by Gong Li, is carried in a sedan chair to an arranged marriage with the ill and much older owner of a winery. The trip traverses desert country, arid and rocky. Then the party crosses great sorghum fields, and in those fields it is attacked. The girl is saved from rape by one of the chair-bearers, and soon the procession continues to the winery. A few days after the wedding ceremony, she goes to visit her parents, and this time the man who saved her carries her into the sorghum fields and, not against her will, makes love to her.

In succeeding years the old husband dies; Gong marries the young bearer, played by Jiang Wen; the two have a son; and the winery, which makes its wine from sorghum, prospers. Bandits plague them, and the chief bandit is bravely confronted by Jiang. Then comes a plague too great for them to handle: the invasion of the Japanese. The invaders' cruelties result in carnage but not utter submission.

The film's intent is clearly to present an epic, a ballad of common people struggling against adversities, suffering but never faltering, a ballad through which winds a colorful strand of passion and love. Both the epic effect and the personal quality are heightened by the voice-over spoken by the young couple's grandson (whom we never see), bearing witness to his grandparents' struggle and their love.

Red Sorghum proves that one besetting trouble of films is truly international: the filmmaking is better than the film-writing. The authors—there were three—have a weak sense of time-dimension: some minor events take as much time as major ones. And the long last section about the Japanese comes as a surprise. First, we have had no hint until then of the film's period; it might have been centuries ago. Second, that last section is not germane to what has preceded it. It's so unprepared, in the musical sense, that it seems an addendum, to whoop up the picture to a big conclusion.

But Zhang Yimou is a talent. He is 37, a somewhat older member of the first generation of filmmakers to follow the Cultural Revolution. The Beijing Film Academy, which had been closed for 12 years, reopened in 1978, and Zhang, though older than the other applicants, was admitted. After graduation in 1982, he worked as a cinematographer and an actor. With *Red Sorghum* he announces a directorial presence.

Very quickly he shows an instinct for the succinct. Much of the opening sequence is shot in close-up of the bride's face, which puts the weight of the drama on her performance. This is a move toward the personal that is quite unlike party-rhetoric films, Chinese or otherwise, and it gives the picture immediacy.

Zhang's style—and it can already be called style—winningly combines sweep and subtlety. The many large action sequences—bandits, winery troubles, Japanese invasion—are treated with long camera curves, with *enjoyment*, that are reminders of Kurosawa. As for subtlety, we never even glimpse the old bridegroom, though he is made graphic, and the bride's wedding night is conveyed by one short cry after the chamber doors are closed.

Zhang obviously has ability with actors, which leads to a reliance on them—to help create the film. At the start Gong plays with little glances that convey all we need to know of her position in this world and her feelings about the marriage. As the story unrolls, she acquires a size of expression and gesture that matches her growth as a woman. Jiang seems an unlikely candidate for sympathy early on, but his egg-shaped, bat-eared head, his open countenance, become quite endearing as the actor grows from his initial teasings of the bride, when he is a chair-bearer, to the heroic.

My experience of Chinese films is meager, but of those that I've seen, this is the first that has revealed a director of non-provincial sensibility. Zhang quite apparently knows the film cultures of other countries and is absorbing them—

FILMS WORTH SEEING

A Fish Called Wanda. A few lapses but a lot of laughs in this farce about an Anglo-American team robbing a bank in London. John Cleese is splendid. (Reviewed 8/29/88)

The Last Temptation of Christ. Better than one might expect. Utterly serious, occasionally moving, though often hectic. Willem Dafoe plays Jesus with earnest simplicity. (9/12&19/88)

Midnight Run. A series of sharp and witty dialogues between Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin, strung on a tiresome bang-bang plot. (8/29/88)

Pascali's Island. The atmosphere—an Aegean island, 1908—is inviting, the political intrigue is promising. The promise falters; but the acting by Ben Kingsley, Charles Dance, and Helen Mirren is sterling. (8/8&15/88)

SK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to make genuinely Chinese films that are for more than local consumption.

The title role of *Madame Sousatzka* is the sort of concoction that might have been arranged for Simone Signoret in her later days. I was surprised to see that the gifted Ruth Prawer Jhabvala co-wrote the script. (With the director, John Schlesinger, from a novel by Bernice Rubens.) Madame is a bejeweled, painted, famous old piano teacher whose London flat is crammed with mementos and whose dialogue is crammed with fortune-cookie wisdom about art. The role has Awards written all over it, to such a blatant degree that the part exists by itself, independent of the film. It's a mechanism that, with a few adjustments of terminology, could easily be transposed to another context—say, a cranky old mathematics teacher in Irkutsk.

Into the part stepped—plunged—Shirley MacLaine, now at the point in her career where she expects, and gets, plaudits simply for being frank about her age. MacLaine brings not much more to the job than candor about herself and relish of the plummy role. She doesn't even try for the foreign accent that the woman quite obviously ought to have: this is explained away by saying that her Russian mother moved to New York and brought her up there. MacLaine just rides along on the creaky vehicle that has been carpentered for her, not doing much about it. At one point she says to her prize student that good piano playing comes from *there*—and pokes him in the solar plexus. So does good acting, he might have replied.

This prize student is a poor Indian adolescent. She bullies him, of course, because she admires him, of course, and he progresses, of course. *And* he betrays her by appearing in public before she thinks he's ready. *And* he leaves her for another, even more prominent teacher. He will, however, always adore her and be grateful to her. The wrecker's ball starts to demolish the buildings on Madame's street, as the film ends, to pound home the idea of change.

The once-interesting Schlesinger, falling through *Honky Tonk Freeway* and *The Falcon and the Snowman*, continues his descent with this crumbly-stale tearjerker. Earlier in his career he sometimes overreached and fumbled. No longer. *Madame Sousatzka* is so comfily trite that Schlesinger, once intelligently ambitious, seems only cynical. □

Increase your interest in Israel
Ampal now offers

11% FIFTEEN YEAR ZERO COUPON
- $10,000 yields $47,847 in 15 years
- Non callable
- May be put after 5 years at a 10% yield to early maturity

10% FIXED RATE CURRENT INCOME
- $10,000 minimum
- **$100,000+ discounted to 97%**
- Redeemable after 5 years at 100%

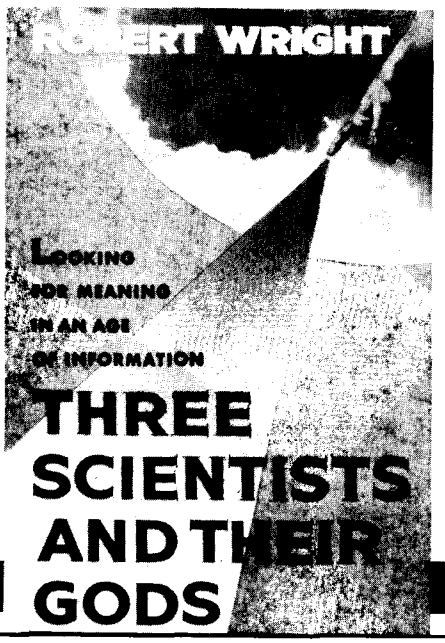
PRIME +1% VARIABLE RATE CURRENT INCOME SOLD OUT
- $5,000 minimum priced at 100%
- $100,000+ discounted to 98.5%
- Minimum rate 7.5%
- No maximum rate
- Due Nov. 1, 1992

- You pay no commissions because the underwriter receives a concession from the issuer.
- 100% of your investment goes to work immediately for you and for Israel.
- Principal and interest are payable in U.S. dollars.

For more information and a prospectus for any of the securities described above, call Ampal Securities Corporation:
1-800-445-6508
In Wisconsin: (414) 352-8870
Member NASD and SIPC
This is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy securities. The offer is made only by the prospectus which may be obtained in any state wherein the underwriter may lawfully offer the securities.

FIRMLY ROOTED IN ISRAEL, BRANCHING OUT IN NEW DIRECTIONS
AMPAL
AMERICAN ISRAEL CORPORATION

OF SCIENCE AND SPIRIT.



Award-winning writer Robert Wright explores what science has to say about the meaning of modern life.

"With a penetrating intelligence and superb writerly confidence, Wright interprets some of the great ideas of our time....The prose is so pleasurable one hardly realizes how much one is learning. In a sense Wright has invented a new genre, beyond history and sociology of science to psychology of science—all in the context of a superbly literate wit."
—Melvin Konner, author of *The Tangled Wing: Biological Constraints on the Human Spirit*

"No reflective person can fail to be excited by these ideas."
—Heinz R. Pagels, author of *The Cosmic Code and Perfect Symmetry*

Published by
Times BOOKS
A Random House, Inc. Company

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On The Edge Of Silence

Six Memos for the Next Millennium
by Italo Calvino

(Harvard University Press, 124 pp., $12.95)

Under the Jaguar Sun
by Italo Calvino
translated by William Weaver

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 86 pp., $12.95)

I.

IN AN ESSAY on the death of Roland Barthes, Italo Calvino wrote of conflating texts and life stories, of combining Barthes's book on photography with the photographs that are all that remain of Barthes himself. We have to do something of the same sad sort with Calvino. We read the lectures he was to have given at Harvard—light, graceful, self-mocking prophecies and promises made on literature's behalf—as fragile last words, a cheerful text strangely ignorant of its author's abrupt disappearance. Calvino wrote five of the lectures, and was planning to complete the sixth and last on his arrival in Cambridge. But he died before he left Europe, on September 19, 1985. He was 62.

He was, his widow tells us, "delighted" to have found the word "memos" for his title, and we can easily see why. The potential pompousness of the enterprise—lecturing on literature at large, taking a thousand years at a time—is defused by a term that is both bureaucratic and tiny: the millennium is an office down the corridor, we can send a note. In a movement entirely characteristic of his fiction, Calvino wants to address both vastness and minute detail, universal history and personal taste. Thus he says that our millennium "has seen the birth and development of the modern languages of the West, and of the literatures that have explored the expressive, cognitive, and imaginative possibilities of these languages. It has also been the millennium of the book . . ." A large field; but Calvino chooses to pluck out of it only "certain values, qualities, or peculiarities of literature that are close to my heart . . ."

The memo and the millennium together make a delicately mixed metaphor, a serious joke. And it was an inspired touch on Esther Calvino's part to keep the number "six" in the book's title, even though it prints only five lectures; not simply because Calvino planned and named six lectures ("Lightness," "Quickness," "Exactitude," "Visibility," "Multiplicity," "Consistency"), but because the slippage is a sort of metaphor, too. Human plans go awry, but messages do arrive: the last memo is there if we imagine it, and we can imagine it.

The lectures are a little disappointing at first. In spite of their title, they try too hard for the respectable academic balance, the donnish even hand. Calvino speaks in praise of lightness and quickness, but not, he says, because he considers the virtues of weight "any less compelling" or wishes to "deny the pleasures of lingering." "We would be unable to appreciate the lightness of language if we could not appreciate language that has some weight to it." Calvino means that the weightiness of Dante's world and language is all right, that it is just as admirable as Cavalcanti's speed and agility; but the argument is judicious to the point of torpor. It hides Calvino's genuine and lively preference for lightness and quickness: he really does find them more compelling. The lectures are loosely organized, too; he worries about this periodically, seeks to fix his dangling argument the way a man might tug at his ties. "Have a great number of threads been interwoven in this lecture?" he asks. Neither woven nor interwoven in this case, just hung out in the wind.

But the disappointment gives way to a special kind of enchantment once we realize what Calvino is doing, and the extent to which his academic worries are only the expression of a mild embarrassment, the reflection of an occasion that honors him but makes him nervous. The lectures are not progressive explorations of the qualities they name. They keep invading each other's turf: quickness gets into the lecture on lightness, lightness (a feather signifying precision in ancient Egypt) into the one on exactitude; exactitude into the lecture on multiplicity; multiplicity into the one on visibility. These crossovers don't appear to be carefully planned, but they are not confusion, either. They help us see that Calvino is looking not at five or six but at dozens of clustered, overlapping, possibly unnameable literary qualities, which are scarcely even signaled by the schoolmasterly labels he holds up. The labels are visual images, starting points for thought. Calvino's gift is not for seeing two sides to a question, but for seeing how a question conceals other, endlessly shifting and multiplying questions, and even some unlikely answers; for seeing how a word can drift among a family of meanings.

The ironic terseness of the titles, their combination of clarity and diffidence, may suggest something of this approach. And sometimes there are literally visual images, or images as literal as words can manage. Calvino thinks of Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* as a figure of lightness. "I would also like Mercutio's dancing gait to come along with us across the threshold of the new millennium." Calvino doesn't mention Mercutio's pointless death in someone else's quarrel, but he does think that the world of the play resembles ours: this instance of lightness is carefully selected, set against violence. Even more strikingly, Calvino evokes the poet Cavalcanti lightly vaulting over a tomb in a Boccaccio story: "Were I to choose an auspicious image for the new millennium, I would choose that one: the sudden agile leap of the poet-philosopher who raises himself above the weight of the world."

Quickness in Calvino's view is not sheer speed, or even speed at all; it is a differential, an alert "adjustment," a sense of the relationship, for example, "between physical speed and speed of mind," or between lived and narrated time. In the most brilliant individual moment in these lectures, Calvino finds a perfect precision even in Leopardi's celebration of the indeterminate landscape, of hidden or reflected lighting, which offers us the "uncertain, indistinct, imperfect, incomplete, or out of the ordinary." "The poet of vagueness can only be the poet of exactitude," Calvino says. This is not a paradox, only a refinement of language: if you really

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

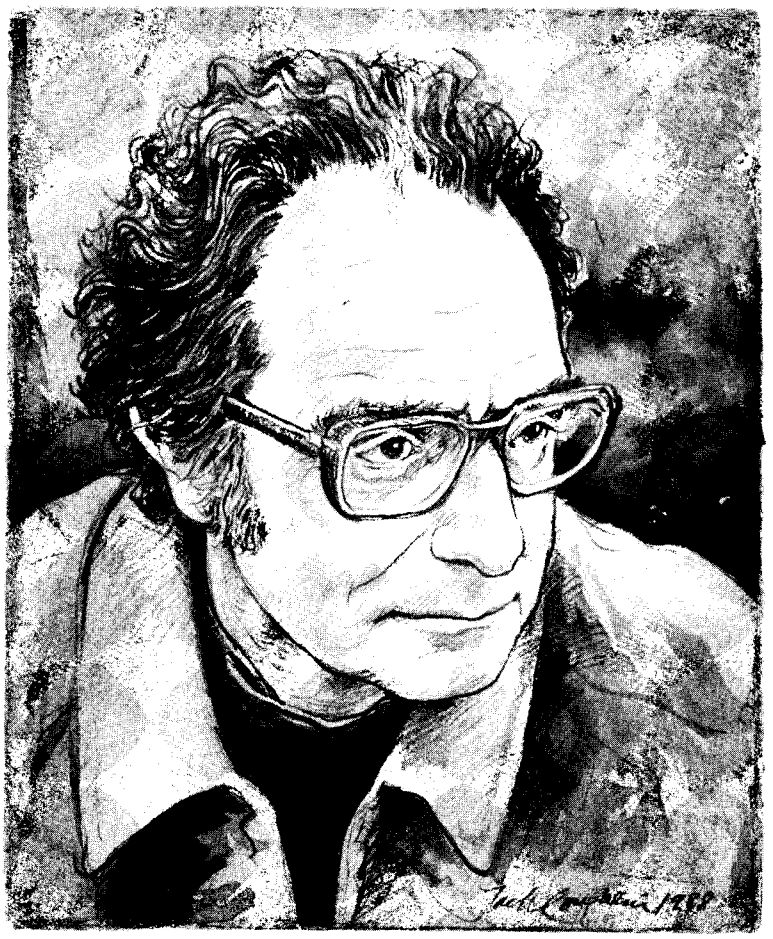
want to enjoy the half-light, you have to give it your full attention.

"Visibility" is a lecture about images and the imagination—"in devising a story," Calvino says, "the first thing that comes to my mind is an image that for some reason strikes me as charged with meaning, even if I cannot formulate this meaning in discursive or conceptual terms"—beginning with Dante and ending with Balzac and Escher. "Multiplicity," finally, tracks a vision of modernity—as skepticism, as pursuit of possibility, as pluralism, as a realm of networks and juggled combinations—from Carlo Emilio Gadda via Flaubert and Borges to Georges Perec.

Calvino's larger arguments are casual, but his insights are not. Or to put it another way, Calvino's topics are less important than what they permit. They permit, for example, a beautifully paced account of his own reading, a record of cherished books and images, which amounts to a discreet fragment of autobiography. Leopardi is a major presence: he appears again and again. So does Lucretius. Paul Valéry is Calvino's modern master, the creator of *Monsieur Teste*, a "great intellectual personage of this century." Borges is said to have achieved Valéry's aesthetic ideal, while his *Ficciones* contain "the last great invention of a new literary genre in our time." The "last real 'event' in the history of the novel so far," though, is Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual*, which appeared in 1978.

Calvino also speaks warmly of Balzac, Flaubert, de Quincey, James, Proust, Kafka, Musil, the comics he devoured before he was even able to read, the famous paintings he reads as frozen stories, the cinema (another fund of images that "became an absolute obsession"). As you can see, his preferred mode is praise. He is describing his taste, not serving an orthodoxy. But I am struck by the extravagant appropriateness of this reading and looking for a writer like Calvino. He has read and seen exactly what we thought he would have read and seen. If Borges had invented Calvino, he would also have invented this intellectual genealogy.

This is not to say Calvino is predictable, or the victim of a modern fashion. It is to say that he has put his reading and looking to serious effect; that he is a writer who reads, who pays attention. The genealogy is, then, less than a canon and more than a private journey. It is a recognizable track through modernity, a picture of some of the century's significant ghosts, the ones that haunt modern writing; and it allows us to wonder what writing will be like, what it will miss, when it tries to avoid or ignore a sizable proportion of the names I have just mentioned, or forgets the comics and the paintings and the movies.



DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

II.

IN HIS LAST Harvard lecture, Calvino mentions a "tour-de-force" by Alfred Jarry, *L'amour absolu*. It is a short novel that can be read as telling "three completely different stories" at once: of a condemned man awaiting execution, of an insomniac imagining a death sentence, and of Christ. The central story of Calvino's own *Under the Jaguar Sun*, called "A King Listens," doesn't invite quite these readings, but it comes close to one of them. Though one narrative, it can be read as several stories occupying the same textual space: as the story of a king, for example, alone in a vast throne room, remembering his violent accession to power, fearing his violent end; as a metaphor for insomnia or solitude, figured in the ever waking, unattended monarch; as a picture of writing and reading, of the way we put fabulous (and not so fabulous) worlds together out of words.

The story is told throughout in a casual, intimate second-person mode, as if we were talking to ourselves, or reading aloud from some sort of instructions manual, or reciting a memorized lesson:

> The scepter must be held in the right hand, erect; you must never, never put it down, and for that matter you would have no place to put it: there are no tables beside the throne, or shelves or stands to hold, say, a glass, an ashtray, a telephone . . .

We stay in this kingdom of mild comedy for a while, in this realm of the awkward nursery rhyme. Our ermine cloak makes our neck itch, we are not all that comfortable with our big belt, our medals, our fringed epaulets. Still, we can scratch ourselves when we like. "You are the king; nobody can utter a word of censure. The very idea." There is, of course, the matter of our bodily needs, but that is taken care of: the throne doubles as a privy, and "carefully chosen and trained court ladies" see to our carnal desires when and if they arise. But then the comedy shifts:

> All your previous life has been only a waiting to become king; now you are king; you have only to reign. And what is reigning if

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not this long wait? Waiting for the moment when you will be deposed, when you will have to take leave of the throne, the scepter, the crown, and your head.

The palace becomes "the ear of the king," a "clock," an acoustical labyrinth in which we listen for the sounds of normality, or of conspiracy, or worse, of normality as the sign of conspiracy: the trumpets sound as usual, but with a touch too much precision perhaps. Is there "an excess of zeal" in the otherwise ordinary rolling of the drums? We hear a knocking on the wall. A message from our predecessor, now deep in some dungeon? "Every palace," we are told, "stands on cellars where someone is buried alive or where some dead man cannot find peace." Does the message threaten us, console us? How can we read it? It is just a noise, random thumps that only desire or fear or understanding could convert to meaning. Now the palace becomes "the body of the king": "In an unknown part of this body, a menace is lurking, your death is already stationed there . . ." We hear a voice from outside, a song. But we don't find the voice, or the woman who owns it.

"A King Listens" doesn't quite find a narrative logic that would keep the promise of its marvelous beginning and middle until its end, but it manages to be light and scaring at the same time. And behind the superimposed stories of king, insomniac, solitary, writer, reader, we may want to find the single tale of the Cartesian mind in its palace/penitentiary, the creator of anything it thinks, but unable to see what it hasn't thought:

> Your every attempt to get out of the cage is destined to fail: it is futile to seek yourself in a world that does not belong to you, that perhaps does not exist. For you there is only the palace, the great re-echoing vaults, the sentries' watches, the tanks that crunch the gravel, the hurried footsteps on the staircase . . .

Beckett gets an effect rather like this, the mind digging its own hallucinated grave; and he is very funny. But Beckett is not light. "My working method," Calvino says at the beginning of his lectures, "has more often than not involved the subtraction of weight." In the case of this story, it is hard to believe he had to take much weight away.

THE THREE stories in *Under the Jaguar Sun* are said to be members of a projected five, one story allocated to each sense. As we have seen with his lectures, Calvino likes the challenge of a limited set, a shape, a rule; and he likes to escape or change the nature of the challenge, too. The king's story plainly belongs to the ear, but not only to the ear. The first story in the book, which provides the title, is set in Mexico. It concerns taste, concentrates on spices and human sacrifice, the real and metaphorical cannibalism that belongs to love and "erases the lines" between our bodies and our food. The last story, "The Name, the Nose" (which in Italian doesn't sound like an

THE FUNDAMENTALIST PHENOMENON
A VIEW FROM WITHIN:
A RESPONSE FROM WITHOUT
November 14-16, 1988

A high-level academic conference which will explore the nature of religious fundamentalism today, the profound affect it has had on the American polity and the challenges it presents to liberals.

Speakers and respondents are noted academicians and writers from within the fundamentalist as well as the liberal communities.

Opening address to be delivered by
Jaroslav Pelikan, Yale University.

Special presentation by
Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen
Former Charge d'Affaires
U.S. Embassy, Tehran and hostage; 1979-81

All sessions to be held at the Brookdale Center of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City.

For further information contact:
Dr. Norman J. Cohen, Director of Rabbinic School,
HUC-JIR, One West Fourth Street, New York, NY 10012
(212) 674-5300.

Get rid of moles, gophers and other burrowing pests, with . . .

Mole-Ex VI

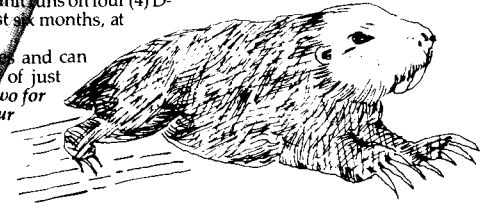
Just $59.95*

But read the ad for an even better deal!

• *Mole-Ex VI protects about 1,000 sq. yds. against moles, gophers and other pests. Do not confuse this advanced device with similar looking, but much less sophisticated and less powerful units! At our special "3-for-2" price, the advanced Mole-Ex VI system is less expensive than any competing unit.*

There can be few things as annoying as seeing your beautiful lawn, your yard being ruined by moles, gophers, and other burrowing pests. You may have tried pouring poison down their holes or getting rid of them with other nostrums. And you've found that nothing really works. But now comes *Mole-Ex VI*, the revolutionary electronic solution to an age-old problem. It *does* work! Spike *Mole-Ex VI* into your lawn. It emits short, high-pitched shrieks (at the threshold of ultrasound) in 15 sec. intervals. They are barely audible to humans, but they are calibrated to be totally distressing to moles, gophers, ground squirrels, shrews, and other burrowing pests. Those varmints can barely see, but their hearing is fine-tuned. Once they get a blast of *Mole-Ex VI*, they'll scamper away, leave your property and will never return.

Mole-Ex VI is the state of the art in the control of burrowing rodents. The unit is made of virtually indestructible anodized aluminum and of tough ABS plastic. It's made for years of rugged use. It is totally safe, of course, around children and pets. The unit runs on four (4) D-cells (not included). They should last for at least six months, at full run, before you need to replace them.



We buy *Mole-Ex VI's* in very large quantities and can therefore offer them at the exceptional price of just $59.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $119.90, and we'll send you a third one with our compliments — absolutely FREE!*** If you've had it with moles and gophers, if you're tired of seeing your yard or lawn torn up and ruined by those pests, get *Mole-Ex VI*: It will get rid of that annoying problem once and for all!

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 621-1203
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Please give order **#1005 E679.** If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. We cannot ship without this. UPS/insurance: $5.95 for one *Mole-Ex VI*, $8.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one year warranty.

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

allusion to Umberto Eco, I guess), has three settings in which a woman is lost, found, and lost again in a world of perfumes: a *belle époque* Paris, a prehistoric forest, some sort of swinging London. Scents, like sounds and tastes, are a language, a lexicon we could easily forfeit.

Thus this most writerly of writers, once again, as in *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* (1973), a book of stories based on the mute Tarot pack, is drawn to anything but words, as if a certain arrogance of words were always to be resisted, as if our garrulousness threatened to destroy all the meanings of silence. These are good stories, quite masterly in their way, but they are a little bloodless, despite the Mexican topic. They are elegantly thought out, but not fueled by any very urgent feeling.

III.

IN HIS THIRD Harvard lecture, Calvino speaks of *Invisible Cities* (1972) as "the book in which I think I managed to say most," and quotes an extraordinary passage that illustrates the double drift of his writing toward the large and the small, or as he says, toward "the mental space of bodiless rationality" and "a space crammed with objects." The framework of the book has a young Marco Polo describing fabulous cities to a weary and lucid Kublai Khan, an emperor who has come to the end of the very idea of empire, who see his splendid dominion as "an endless, formless ruin . . ." The emperor is a keen chess player, but loses even that taste: "Now it was the game's purpose that eluded him. Each game ends in a gain or a loss: but of what?"

But then Marco Polo performs what seems to be a miracle of knowledge, born of a mixture of memory and sheer attention to particulars, restoring to the Great Khan (and to us) the intricate profusion of the world:

> "Your chessboard, sire, is inlaid with two woods: ebony and maple. The square on which your enlightened gaze is fixed was cut from the ring of a trunk that grew in a year of drought: you see how its fibers are arranged? . . . Here is a thicker pore: perhaps it was a larva's nest; not a woodworm, because once born it would have begun to dig, but a caterpillar that gnawed the leaves and was the cause of the tree's being chosen for chopping down. . . . This edge was scored by the wood carver with his gouge so that it would adhere to the next square, more protruding."
>
> The quantity of things that could be read in a little piece of smooth and empty wood overwhelmed Kublai; Polo was already talking about ebony forests, about rafts laden with logs that come down the rivers, or docks, of women at the windows . . .

"From the moment I wrote that page," Calvino says in his lecture, "it became clear to me that my search for exactitude was branching out in two directions." It was a quest for "abstract patterns" matched by a desire to "present the tangible aspect of things as precisely as possible. "Exactitude"—the title of this lecture/memo—is an odd word, not itself quite exact enough perhaps, and certainly too dry unless we can hear the mockery in it. *Invisible Cities* has all the passion that Calvino's thinner stories lack, and indeed that his interests might seem to exclude. But a passion for understanding is possible, and so is a passion for failing to understand.

Earlier in the same lecture, Calvino speaks of a seeming perversity or disobedience of his mind:

> Sometimes I try to concentrate on the story I would like to write, and I realize that what interests me is something else entirely or, rather, not anything precise but everything that does not fit in with what I ought to write—the relationship between a given argument and all its possible variants and alternatives, everything that can happen in time and space. . . . This is a devouring and destructive obsession, which is enough to render writing impossible. In order to combat it, I try to limit the field of what I have to say, divide it into still more limited fields, then subdivide these again. . . . Then another kind of vertigo seizes me, that of the detail of the detail of the detail, and I am drawn into the infinitesimal, the infinitely small . . .

This mental habit leaves a tiny but regular stylistic trace in the phrase usually translated as "for that matter," which introduces the abrupt, disrespectful afterthought, and takes the argument off into quite new adventures. What doesn't fit—the superfluous detail—represents not so much a quest for exactitude as a persistent doubt about all achievement of order and generality. Calvino is saying that he (along with his fictional characters) likes to read the world as a set of designs, or possible designs, and also as everything that refutes design, that makes design a mere dream, a fastidious fantasy.

There is a wonderful story in *Mr. Palomar* (1983) about a group of schoolchildren being led round the ruins at Tula, in Mexico. Their teacher tells them the date

OVERPOPULATION IS DEVASTATING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Most Americans think of overpopulation as something that is threatening the enviroment in far-off countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Yet our own country is vastly overpopulated in terms of the long range carrying capacity of our environment, which we seem to be doing our level best to destroy just as rapidly as we possibly can. The primary cause of environmental destruction in our own nation, as well as in other countries, is simple: too many people.

There is a direct link between population size and environmental deterioration. Total consumption is the product of population multiplied by per capita consumption; total pollution is the product of total consumption times pollution per unit of consumption. Those are simple, incontestable facts.

Acid rain that is devastating our forests, and destroying aquatic life in our lakes, rivers, estuaries and coastal waters, the green-house effect from the build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, urban crowding, traffic congestion, ground water contamination and depletion, the disposal of nuclear waste, toxic waste and garbage, our vanishing farmlands and wetlands: all these grave problems, and more, warn us that—if we truly care about saving our environment—we must take action *now* to halt and eventually to reverse the growth of U.S. population.

Under these conditions does it make any sense at all to continue allowing legal immigration to add nearly 600,000 more people each year to our already far-too-great numbers?

Send today for our FREE BROCHURE and learn why we believe that legal immigration should be reduced to an *overall ceiling* of 100,000 a year, *including all relatives and refugees*. Such a ceiling would still be generous, yet would give priority, as it should, to the preservation of our environment, and to the interest of future generations of Americans.

NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH, INC.
16 East 42nd Street, Suite 1042 (F-2)
New York, N.Y. 10017

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the pyramids and pillars, what stone they are made from, what civilization they belong to, supplies facts about statues and carvings, always ending his discourse with a disclaimer: "We don't know what they mean." Mr. Palomar, a man Calvino describes as both nervous and "belated," is visiting Tula with a Mexican friend who knows what everything means, who is a mine of information and analogical reference. Mr. Palomar enjoys this performance ("the play of interpretation, allegorical readings, have always seemed to him a supreme exercise of the mind"), but he is also drawn to the schoolteacher's dogged hermeneutical modesty: "What had at first seemed only a brisk lack of interest is ... a scholarly and pedagogical position":

> A stone, a figure, a sign, a word that reaches us isolated from its context is only that stone, figure, sign, or word: we can try to define them, to describe them as they are, and no more than that; whether, beside the face they show us, they also have a hidden face, it is not for us to know. The refusal to comprehend more than what the stones show us is perhaps the only way to evince respect for their secret; trying to guess is a presumption, a betrayal of that true, lost meaning.

Even so, the discretion attributed to the severe schoolteacher is not available to Mr. Palomar (or to us?). "He knows he could never suppress in himself the need to translate, to move from one language to another, from concrete figures to abstract words.... Not to interpret is impossible, as refraining from thinking is impossible." What Calvino is picturing for us, then, is a mind on the edge of silence, as well as the thoughts that are the mind's permanent noise. The thoughts may be dark, like the Khan's, returned to light by new thoughts found in the silence of wood; or playful, wistful like Mr. Palomar's, thoughts of the silence itself and its inevitable invasion.

Exactitude—the sort of specificity Calvino means by exactitude, the twin exactitudes of geometry and of objects—is one of the ways in which silence can correct and inform speech. But it is only one of the ways, and it scarcely ever works alone. Marco Polo, for example, infers whole forests from the emperor's chessboard, logging rafts, docks, waiting women. This is neither knowledge nor observation but imagination, or rather, it is imagination launching itself from detailed knowledge and observation. We might say the same for Mr. Palomar looking at the snakes in a zoo:

> Is it this atmosphere, more than the reptiles in themselves that obscurely attracts Mr. Palomar? A damp, soft warmth soaks the air like a sponge; a sharp stink, heavy, rotten, forces him to hold his breath; shadow and light lie stagnant in a motionless mixture of days and nights: are these the sensations of a man who peers out beyond the human?

The stink and the light and the damp are exact, the result of a worldly attention like Marco Polo's. But the questions belong to the imagination; to an imagination tempted neither by precision nor by pattern, but by the unchartable limits of its territory.

The imagination for Calvino is a way of thinking possibility, "a repertory of what is potential, what is hypothetical, of what does not exist and has never existed, and perhaps never will exist but might have existed." Literature allows us to change our "image of the world," and for that reason it needs spectacular ambitions. "Literature remains alive only if we set ourselves immeasurable goals, far beyond all hope of achievement." This sounds rather grandiose, and quite unlike the Calvino I have been trying to evoke, until we realize the goals he has in mind. They are the literary equivalent of a vow of poverty. Like Mr. Palomar, Calvino is interested in what exceeds or eludes us.

IF SOMEONE objects that the human self gets lost in the play of possibilities that the imagination (and literature) puts on for us, Calvino answers with a question. What is the self? "Who are we, who is each one of us, if not a combinatoria of experiences, information, books we have read, things imagined? Each life is an encyclopedia, a library, an inventory of objects, a series of styles ..." But this is not his final, or his favorite, answer. "Perhaps the answer that stands closest to my heart," he writes on the last page of the last completed lecture, "is something else: Think what it would be to have a work conceived from outside the *self*, a work that would let us escape the limited perspective of the individual ego, not only to enter into selves like our own but to give speech to that which has no language ..." We can't get beyond the human, beyond interpretation, and a speaking silence is not silence anymore; but the very dream helps to humanize us, to remind us that difference is not our enemy.

In a later preface to his first novel, *The Path to the Nest of Spiders*, which appeared in 1947, Calvino speaks of a "remorse toward reality" and of "this failure that writing always is," but the phrases are not as dark or as absolute as they may sound. They are ascetic, rather, caught up in irony and modesty. Calvino returns again and again, in his fiction and essays and lectures, to the fidelities and the infidelities of words to things. "There is no language without deceit," Marco Polo says in *Invisible Cities*—including *that* piece of language, we assume. So the presence even of deceit is not permanent or stable. Marco Polo also argues the reverse proposition: "Falsehood is never in words; it is in things."

That, also, is too simple. Falsehood is the name of a relation between words

RETREAT

Amazing that the shrapnel of the light
tousles the ferns and the wild phlox. Amazing
how field gives way to woods, oak groves, how flat
pastureland explodes in ravines—then, rising
to crests and ridges where glaciers once scooped
Ohio's malleable terrain, reverses
itself: the violence of the land still kept
yet, amazingly, kept still. What surprises
must be in all things! Dragonflies, for instance,
and windows whose crazed panes flow gradually,
transforming the transparency of gin
on an oak credenza. What would I be
without these shattering views? The creek's pistons,
the off-white fireworks of the dandelion!

JOHN DRURY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and things; and so is truth. Both are the writer's business, and both are involved, as Calvino says in his first lecture, in "the use of words as I understand it—that is, words as a perpetual pursuit of things, as a perpetual adjustment to their infinite variety." There is romance in such a view, as well as a certainty of failure; the failure is part of the romance, one of the ways in which the world's riches are celebrated. In a later lecture, Calvino speaks of the "painstaking effort to adapt what is written to what is not written," which is like Mr. Palomar's contemplation of the snakes or the Mexican ruins. And yet another lecture ends with a glamorous picture of what writing *can* do: produce a world of light and movement from the mere alphabet, from a poor and arbitrary collection of human marks, "pages of signs, packed as closely together as grains of sand, representing the many-colored spectacle of the world on a surface that is always the same and always different, like dunes shifted by the desert wind."

Literature is "a search for knowledge," Calvino says. His example helps us to search carefully and to accept unexpected gifts, the benefits of what looks like the wrong knowledge, and thereby to avoid the twin banalities of claiming that either the knowledge or the search is everything. If there is a lesson in Calvino, it is that no perspective is everything, that even defeat is not nothing; that nothingness, perhaps, does not exist. "He is the poet of physical concreteness," Calvino says of Lucretius, "but the first thing he tells us is that emptiness is just as concrete as solid bodies."

MICHAEL WOOD

Michael Wood is professor of English at the University of Exeter and is the author of *America in the Movies: "Santa Maria, it had slipped my mind"* (Basic Books).

RETURN TO GENDER

Gender and the Politics of History by Joan Wallach Scott

(Columbia University Press, 242 pp., $29)

When a man today sets out to comment on a book of feminist history written by a woman, it seems reasonable to begin by declaring an interest and, possibly, a position. My view of women, since I can remember, has always been of equals, but, on the whole, rather superior equals. Most of the women I have known well were (are) strong personalities. But as a historian, this did not mean that women figured in my work as prominently as men. To say the least. Partly because of an unreflective acceptance of certain norms that made them invisible or ill-visible, irrelevant, subsumed by categories represented by men. Partly because when space was limited as, one way or another, it always is, I chose to dwell on principal actors or actions. Partly, I suppose, by lack of imagination.

In writing social history it was more natural to take account of women; but only a little more. Not until the 1970s was my consciousness raised, like that of Clio in a title typical of that revendicative decade, but to no great heights. The stridencies of some feminist campaigns were not made to attract me. Though prejudiced in favor of feminist claims, I remained largely ignorant of the wealth of historical work that they inspired.

A book like Joan Scott's *Gender and the Politics of History* is, therefore, doubly welcome. The text that runs less than 200 pages is slender, but it is sinewy and substantive; and it is backed by massive notes from which interested readers can cull rich references about the lives of women past and present, and the vast scholarship available. Scott's essays (this is a collection of essays linked by the twin themes of history and gender) lead from the problems raised by women's history, through analyses of how sexual identities fared in historical treatment and in specific historical situations, to discussions of how equality and different, apparently contradictory values might be creatively reconciled.

The essays are circumstantial, hence occasionally repetitive, but there are good things to glean from every page. Best of all is Scott's distrust of all universalistic claims, her sense that nothing is simple, that, on closer examination, every apparently straightforward presentation raises questions, presents problems, that call for further interpretation. Her opening section, for example, examines some of the problems of writing and rewriting "a feminist history." We begin with common or garden History, in which women appear, when they appear, not as subjects, but as objects—subsumed, even when sympathetically treated, under the universal category "Man." Critical examination reveals particularities that the generalities had concealed: the Renaissance was not a renaissance for women, technology brought women no liberation (of that I am not convinced), democratic revolutions did not include political participation for their sex. Conclusion, roughly put: since the conventional past had been invented by men, in a man's perspective, let us replace the old conventional past by a new conventional past that would be more in tune with our preconceptions.

JUST HOW far can such a rewriting go? How far should it go? It is not enough to show that women took part, a large part, in history. So did horses. They must be shown, rather, to have been actors and agents, as frisky and operative as the men who long monopolized history, and as interesting. In this approach, merely materialist or "class" perspectives are no great help; the subordination of women, Scott reminds us, predates capitalism and continues under socialism. Replacing overblown male figures by overblown female ones does not help, either. Satisfying though it may be to substitute one inequity for another, going from "his-story" to "her-story" provides no solution.

"Writing women into history" involves rewriting history not just to include women, but in the light of reflections that the process of rewriting has provoked. Scott reminds us that the term "woman" covers a multitude of identities, that in my lady's mansion there are many chambers. Just what did "woman" mean, what echoes of prejudice did the term evoke, what purposes did such meanings serve? How did meanings alter with circumstances, with those who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forged them, with those who used them?

This is where the notion of gender comes in. Scott defines it variously (though not contradictorily) as "the social organization of sexual differences," "the social organization of the relationship between the sexes," "a primary way of signifying relationships of power." I take her to mean that, when reference to sex and sexual difference can be misleading, or confusing, or simply loaded with irrelevant associations, "gender" provides a neutral term about power relations between the sexes, relations that are not (Scott insists) biologically determined, that are socially determined and used to legitimate connections that have nothing to do with sex. In a world where size or color are used to signify differentiation and, hence, subordination, sexual differences (so the argument goes) are excellent signifiers, handy in the formulation of work identities or political appeals. They can be referred back, of course, to so-called natural differences; but these "natural" differences are socially, culturally and, in the end, politically determined. So "gender" provides Scott with a way of thinking about how people construct meanings, about the contexts within which meanings are formulated, adjusted, used.

She does this, for example, when she examines the language of Chartism and other 19th-century worker movements for whom the working class or "the people" took masculine form, and women, like children, were relegated to auxiliary and dependent roles. She does this in an appreciative but unsparing reading of E. P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class*, when she concludes that "literal egalitarianism dismissed as reactionary any recognition of the stubborn complexity of sexual difference." Such radical traditions promised equality, but without regard for differences that made equality mean different things for men and women, differences whose recognition might complicate conventional views of women's "natural" role in situations where some would always be more equal than others.

ONE OF SCOTT'S most thought-provoking essays discusses the apparent antithesis between "equality" and "difference." If equality abolishes differences, it does not necessarily free individuals from subordination. The kind of equality that Scott wants would involve indifference to differences: the possibility to be different but equal. This is both reasonable and attractive. Unfortunately, however, difference attracts attention, often hostile attention. It is not clear how reasoning can change this, when Scott herself tells us that what counts is not reason, but the power to impose what one thinks reasonable.

If gender prejudice is to change, it will change not by logical argument, but with circumstances. Not so long ago, social class looked like a fixed, given fact operating under unchanging rules: "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate, God made them high or lowly and ordered their estate." Such views no longer obtain. Identities and definitions associated with male and female may also alter, like those of class, varying with the context, as they have in the past.

Scott demonstrates how apparently immutable sexual identities have been produced, reproduced, transferred, and transmuted in given circumstances. In her hands, apparently objective data turns into just another way of assigning importance to bits of information. She looks at the war of surveys waged during the French 1830s and 1840s, and reveals the realities behind the figures that the statistics aligned: political debates about the impact of industrial capitalism on human lives and public well-being, each survey representing rival self-evident truths legitimized by incontrovertible data. What could be more objective than statistical science, more factual than quantitative evidence? But Scott, unimpressed, wants to know how the surveys were constructed, and how, in turn, they contributed to constructing the "reality" of a past that we still seek in them.

HAVING INDICATED, but hardly exhausted, some of the many virtues of Scott's book, I must take issue with a number of her views. When writing about history and historians, many of the errors Scott denounces seem terribly out of date. She is quite right to say that historians are not trained to be reflective or rigorous about their theory; she could well have added that many of us have no explicit theory. But it is not clear that Foucault, whom she admires, was very reflective about the *facts* on which his theories were based; nor that the theoretically-minded historians who argue that technology did not lighten women's (or anybody's) burden have stopped to compare the joys and the chilblains of swabbing floors with or without a self-wringing mop, let alone of old-style laundering before the advent of washing machines.

Scott rightly and repeatedly attacks universal explanations, illusions that the contingent is really permanent, pretenses that selective visions are exhaustive. But how many serious historians still advance such claims? She denounces historians for believing "that history can faithfully document lived reality," or "that archives are repositories of facts." But how many such positivists are still writing? How many of our graduate students would believe

Call for any book

• Immediate shipment worldwide. • Credit cards or check. • Ask about our overnight gift delivery nationwide. • Free monthly New Title Forecast. • Mail orders welcome. • Open 24 hours every day. • Write or phone for free holiday catalog.

BOOK CALL

1-800-255-2665

In CT or Worldwide (203) 966-5470

59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

Serious Lighting for Serious Readers

Write or call for FREE Catalog

LEVENGER–Tools For Serious Readers

Dept. NR11, 480-C Concord Avenue

Belmont, MA 02178 (617) 484-0014

INTENSITIES & ANALOGIES

by A.R. Thurar

The psychological reasons for everyday behaviors: Art, Drama, Love, Music, Religion, Sex, Sports & many others.

ECR Press, P.O. Box 1208, Stn. B, Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1P 5R3. $8 + $2 s/h (chq. or m.o.)

The Graduate Faculty

Arthur Vidich

Thomas Vietorisz

For *everyone* in The Graduate Faculty, *A through Z*, write or call for a Bulletin: Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Avenue, NYC 10003

(212) 741-5710

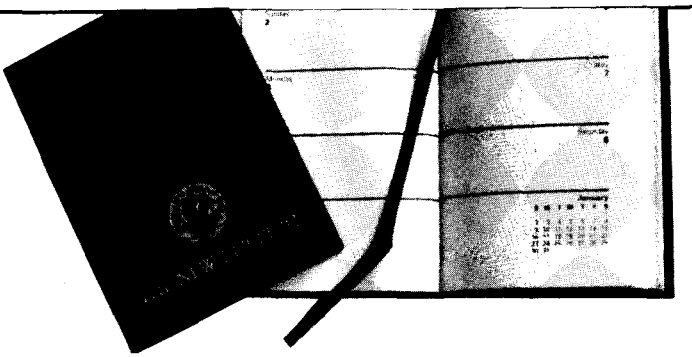
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them? How many more, even if they have not read him, share Proust's view of the Muse of History "who has gathered up everything ... that is not founded upon truth, everything that is merely contingent"? Scott correctly enjoins us to ask not *why* but *how*, to study processes, not probe for origins, to seek out multiple, rather than single, causes. But that's exactly what we have been doing—at least in our common field, French history. As for focusing, as she wishes, on "rhetoric and discourse rather than ideology or consciousness," surely rhetoric and discourse are the stuff of ideology and consciousness?

IF HISTORICAL phenomena are typically and inescapably overdetermined, moreover, why should the history of the sexes (written separately or, better, in relation to each other) reject biological explanations as part of a broad panoply of explanations, and insist "on the exclusively social origins of the subjective identities of men and women"? Such a formula sets unnecessary limits to questions and answers; as if, when studying class relations, details of age, sex, or race were to be dismissed for confusing the issue. I rather suspect that biological references are so firmly set aside and class references so firmly cut down to size precisely in order to keep the issues clearer than they are.

Let me explain. The book's first and major epigraph is taken from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*; and very moving it is. I found it so when I first read Woolf's essay, at 19, on a Dakota, flying from Europe to India. But having spent much of my life until that time in boarding schools, boarding houses, and barracks, it seemed to me that Woolf's main demand, the demand for a room of one's own, reflected the values of a privileged class even more than it reflected the yearnings of an underprivileged sex. And Scott surely knows this. When she dismisses biological definitions and casts class aside, she makes a choice against which, in other contexts, she has set her face. For she expresses disapproval of historical "politics" that sets priorities and "represses some subjects in the name of the importance of others." I disagree. *All* interpretation is selection. Every one of Scott's essays demonstrates that choice is inescapable. So is prejudice. The real requirement is to be clear about what one is doing, and in the name of what one does it.

That is what Scott does. "My motive



Announcing The New Republic 1989 Pocket Diary

For the past few years, we have been giving pocket diaries, embossed in gold with The New Republic name and logo, to our writers and editors and special friends in the media. The diaries have been so popular that we have decided to make them available to our subscribers at a low cost, only $8.95 each.

The diaries are made by Letts of London, whose diaries were favored by Charles Dickens and George Bernard Shaw. Each diary includes weekly calendars with space to write down daily appointments, plus a wine vintage chart, a list of important toll-free telephone numbers, a list of world holidays, metric equivalents, a calorie counter, fifteen blank pages for notes, telephone numbers, and addresses, and more.

The pages are edged in gilt and carry a silken page marker. The diary itself is dark blue with featherweight light-blue pages.

It's elegant and easy to use. The cost to non-subscribers is $10.95, but we're offering it to subscribers for just $8.95, *including* postage.

Available to Our Subscribers, for a Limited Time

YES, Send me the New Republic pocket diary immediately (Please allow 2 to 4 weeks for delivery).

☐ I am a subscriber, $8.95

☐ I am *not* a subscriber, $10.95

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Write to: Pocket Diary, The New Republic
1220 19th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036

Check or Money-Order must accompany each order.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was and is . . . political: to point out and change inequalities." In this book, the inequalities are those between men and women. A generation earlier, or two, they could have been those between men and men, as a first step. It does not matter; her writing is polemical, as some of the finest historical writing has always been, most explicitly in France. Scott enjoins us eloquently to rethink the history of politics and the politics of history, especially with her end in view: a refusal of the age-old domination, a reversal of an unjust hierarchy. Political history, she argues, has been enacted on the field of gender. Gender furnishes particularly convincing alibis and rationalizations because the reference appears so "natural." Indeed. But surely this must be qualified. Political history has been enacted on other fields as well. "Slave or free," for example, sounds as explicit, and once sounded as natural, as "male or female." It is true, as Scott insists, that "gender relations become part of the meaning of power": dominant males, females bleating for man's protection. But people draw their metaphors where they can. Beggar nations, slave nations, nations of prey and nations preyed upon, come up more often than feminine nations or their opposite.

Joan Scott's observations sometimes seem to break down open doors. But she also hammers with good reason on gates that remain stubbornly shut. Whatever the objections they raise (and some will raise no objections), the questions Scott asks deserve pursuit. They will enlarge the scope of historical understanding and spawn new questions to be asked in turn. In this sense, Scott is a revelator. She does not just look for "facts," she seeks out how experience and perception were handled in their time, how they were used, to what purpose. Ironically enough, her pages show how close her assumptions are to the historical mainstream, or to the best of it. Like Christian and non-Christian historians, feminist and non-feminist historians may have different teleologies, but they are troubled by much the same perplexities; their work is based on premises more similar than Scott sometimes makes out. In this tradition, Scott has given us an intelligent, sensitive reflection on the nature of events, of thought, of judgment, of history.

EUGEN WEBER

Eugen Weber is the author of *France, Fin de Siècle* (Harvard University Press).

P.S.

The Letter Left to Me by Joseph McElroy

(Knopf, 152 pp., $16.95)

Joseph McElroy is the most important American novelist working now. His nearly 1,200 page *Women and Men* is a masterwork, this decade's *Gravity's Rainbow*. Now, nobody I know shares either of these judgments, and the editors of TNR wouldn't give me the rest of the magazine to explain them. *The Letter Left to Me* helps. It is a welcome new piece of evidence of McElroy's achievement, a short postscript to the 3,000 pages of McElroy's six novels, and actually a salutation to the reader: a portrait of the artist as bereaved adolescent. It traces the origins of McElroy's intellectual reach, his passionately earnest sensibility, and his desire to reformulate American fiction, to make it authentically contemporary, to fill it with a world of information in which few novelists reside.

In a 1975 essay called "Neural Neighborhoods and Other Concrete Abstracts," McElroy described his beginnings as a writer, the "regular, sensitive American novel" his advisers told him he should write, and what he did write. *A Smuggler's Bible* (1966), his first novel, was a book with the ambition and originality of two other remarkable debuts, William Gaddis's *The Recognitions* and Thomas Pynchon's *V.* Dense with extra-literary learning and scientific discourses, fascinated with impacted urban lives, Faulknerian in its memory and family feeling, multiply framed and fractured, *A Smuggler's Bible* originated the materials and methods that McElroy extended and transformed in the novels that followed—*Hind's Kidnap, Ancient History, Lookout Cartridge*, and even the science fiction *Plus*.

But *Women and Men* is McElroy's magisterial synthesis, a work that places American families in huge and exhaustively developed contexts—historical, political, economic, ecological, even angelic. The novel's protagonists—a feminist activist and a male science reporter—sift their personal paths, their families, their New York City neighbors, and the ideas of their specialist acquaintances, for elements they can turn into saving visions of life in the future. The aim is nothing less than new relations between women and men, between all humankind and an endangered planet. To balance the vast scope of his protagonists' quest, McElroy inserts sharp vignettes, *New Yorker*-style stories about minor characters. Alternating between long torrents of global consciousness and short snapshots of emotion, *Women and Men* is a model of contemporary knowledge and future fiction, a work as large and rich as what we could, with McElroy's appetite for the world, know and be.

Now, a year after *Women and Men*, McElroy presents us with the "regular, sensitive American novel" he never wrote as a young man: an autobiographical story of a boy whose father dies when he is 15. Like McElroy, the unnamed narrator-protagonist of *The Letter Left to Me* grows up in the 1940s in a cultured Brooklyn Heights family and goes to a small New England college. Like McElroy's father, the narrator's went to Harvard on scholarship, shifted after graduation from science to business, worked on Wall Street, and died when his son was 15, leaving behind, according to McElroy in an interview, a reputation as a polymath and as the "nicest person" his neighbors knew.

Precisely how close McElroy's book is to the details of his early life is impossible, and unnecessary, to know. Seemingly as transparent as a memoir, *The Letter* has the structure and texture of fiction, an intricacy and subtlety just beneath its conventionally realistic surface. Composed to resemble "regular, sensitive" novels such as Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* and Agee's *A Death in the Family, The Letter* is also sufficiently different in its conception of consciousness and art to intimate why McElroy did not write it until now, and why he wrote the kind of irregular and often

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

European-influenced fiction that he did.

The Letter begins a few days after the father's funeral in 1946. The narrator's mother gives him a letter his father had written him nearly three years earlier, a letter kept in a safe-deposit box until just before the father's death. Still in shock, the boy initially records odd speculations about the composition of the letter while quoting fragments of it. A startled ambivalence—toward the father for dying, toward the mother for her control, and toward others for being alive—pervades the novel's first pages. Slowly the boy's survivor consciousness, sometimes frozen, sometimes rampant, sketches the father he misses: loved companion, respected authority, household idol. The narrator also reports what others remember about his father: dutiful son, churchgoer, successful financial counselor, learned raconteur, nice person.

The trauma of a parent's death modulates into a family conflict when the boy's step-grandfather and mother arrange to print and to distribute the letter to family and friends without the boy's consent. For the boy, their action raises multiple questions of possession: Is the letter his or his father's? Is it a gift or an investment, a thing or a message? Will the boy ever be himself or always the son of his father? Using the letter as pivot, McElroy draws characters from the boy's family, friends, and acquaintances precisely, if often ambiguously, by their responses to the letter. Shrouded in habit, custom, or hypocrisy, they add to the narrator's task of interpreting the letter, turning this family novel into yet another of McElroy's epistemological enterprises.

When the narrator moves on to college, the letter continues as pivot, for his mother and the dean—to the narrator's astonishment—have it distributed to the boy's freshman classmates. Their more frank responses provide him with new views of his parents, different choices for his own maturity. Oscillating among their responses and his own memories, aspiring to think clearly about the letter, the boy makes an impossible vow at novel's end: "I'll answer the letter. I can't. But I will." The letter seems unanswerable. In it, the father, godlike in the son's estimation, has directed the son to be a "better man" than he was—more learned, more moral.

THE POWER of the absent father, and of inheritance, is a familiar story. With the letter left behind, McElroy invents a new and compelling metaphor for this power: authority is duplicated and diffused to become a symbol of culture itself. Attentive to the details and assumptions of the 1940s, alert to the difficulties of parenthood and the desires of adolescence, alternating between gnawing wit and direct emotion, eschewing sentimentality at every turn, McElroy has written a bildungsroman to set beside *Catcher in the Rye*. Indeed, with its rather unlikable but increasingly curious protagonist, *The Letter* has a maturity that is a good antidote to Salinger's mannerisms and smug sensitivity.

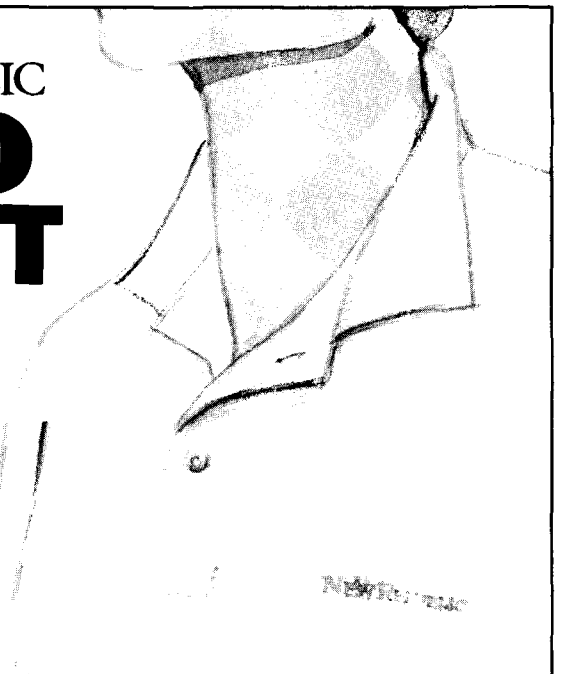
The Letter is most enjoyable and important, however, as a preface to McElroy's "later" (actually his earlier) work. While requiring the son to exceed the polymath father, the letter in the novel is written in "regular," Ben Franklin-like prose that comes to stand for a tradition of American letters—a pragmatic and safe realism—that McElroy's early advisers suggested he follow. But to become the better man his novel's father demanded, McElroy had to become a better writer, one who could find new styles and forms to express the relations between personal life and all that he would come to know of physics, anthropology, cybernetics, geology, and the other sciences in which McElroy's fiction participates, narrative experiments that sometimes obscured the sensitivity to familial matters that we see in *The Letter*. This novel answers the father in something like his own voice, meets the letter of the letter's law. McElroy's other, more innovative novels answer the spirit of the father's law, the demand for a grand wholeness of thought and feeling, information and eloquence, the "better man" and the better writer.

For readers still unacquainted with McElroy, this seventh novel is the place to begin. For readers who have found McElroy's sensibility alien, *The Letter Left to Me* offers access to a novelist whose importance, whose commitment to conveying our information-dense and emotionally confusing modernity, is partly signified by his leaving this book until 1988, 25 years after he began answering the artistic imperatives expressed in it.

TOM LECLAIR

Tom LeClair teaches at the University of Cincinnati and is the author of *In the Loop* (University of Illinois Press).

THE NEW REPUBLIC
POLO SHIRT



The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: The New Republic polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our attractive new logo, The New Republic polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. The New Republic polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes, small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $1.25 per shirt for shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.

To: THE NEW REPUBLIC POLO SHIRT OFFER, 1220 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

Please send me _____ polo shirt(s) in size(s) _____.

I have enclosed a check/money order in the amount of _____ to cover the cost of the shirt ($24.50 each) plus shipping ($1.25 each) plus applicable sales tax (D.C. Residents add 6%.) My address is:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BETWEEN IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE

Operation Babylon: The Story of the Rescue of the Jews of Iraq by Shlomo Hillel

(Doubleday, 301 pp., $19.95)

Shlomo Hillel, now Speaker of the Knesset in Jerusalem, was born in Baghdad in 1923. In 1934 his father decided to emigrate with his family to Palestine, where the son eventually joined a kibbutz, Ma'agan Michael. In 1946, when he was 23 years old, he was sent to Baghdad under a false identity and spent a year in Iraq. During the five years that followed, until 1951, when the vast majority of the Jews of Iraq left for Israel, Hillel was much involved with the fortunes of the community into which he had been born. This book is his own record of his activities and adventures during those years.

Hillel's father had decided to leave Iraq in the wake of two events that alarmed him greatly. The first was the indiscriminate massacre by the Iraqi army of old men, women, and children in the Assyrian village of Simel, near Mosul. The second, which followed shortly afterward, was the unexpected coming to the throne of Ghazi, a young man "with a reputation for being corrupt, hotheaded, irresponsible, a radical nationalist, and an earnest disciple of the Nazis." These events were indeed alarming, portending as they did the thuggish and blood-soaked politics that ever since has fallen to the lot of this unhappy country.

Jews had lived in Iraq long before the coming of Islam and the Arab conquest of Mesopotamia, maintaining an unbroken residence of two-and-a-half millennia. They were now concentrated mostly in Baghdad, where they were the most numerous group, active and prominent in commerce, finance, and the professions. During the 1930s their position was being threatened and gradually eroded by the joint effects of the conflict in Palestine and the officially inspired pan-Arab nationalism, with its fervent admiration of Hitler and the Nazis. But the violence and unscrupulousness of the Iraqi rulers, which no outside force, no constitutional checks, no native habits of civility restrained, were threats closer to home.

The danger culminated in two days of looting and massacre on June 1-2, 1941, following the collapse of a pro-German regime that had, two months before, seized power by a military coup d'état. British troops sent from Palestine had chased out the leaders of the coup and forced the Iraqi army to capitulate. But on the order of the British ambassador, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, these troops, now in the suburbs of the capital, were forbidden from entering the center of Baghdad, and from intervening to protect the lives and the property of defenseless civilians.

These events administered a profound shock to the Jews of Baghdad, and to their sense of security. At this point, the Jewish Agency was able to establish contacts and sympathies within the community, largely because Palestinian Jews, employed by the British Army in Iraq, could now enter and leave the country in relative freedom. The Zionist emissaries were not very numerous, and the underground networks they established were neither extensive nor influential. They promoted Zionist ideology and organized the (illegal) transport to Palestine of a small number of young people who were persuaded that their future lay in the Jewish National Home. When the war ended and British forces departed, however, these emissaries could no longer come to Iraq freely. Hence Shlomo Hillel's dispatch to Baghdad in 1946, where he helped, along with a few others, to direct the emigration network that had been created during the war.

Hillel saw it as his mission to raise a new generation of "dedicated activists." And his business was indeed with the young, whom he arranged to smuggle out of the country, always without their parents' knowledge and often against their parents' will. The Jewish communal authorities knew of these activities and took a dim view of them. The emissaries from Palestine were interlopers "whose meddling was likely to bring disaster on everyone."

Both before the British evacuation of Palestine in May 1948 and during the conflict that erupted when Arab armies invaded the country, the Iraqi government was actively hostile to Zionism and the new state of Israel. Though the operations of the forces that it sent to Palestine ended in a fiasco, it was able to vent the full force of its fury on the Iraqi Jews, who came to be treated not as citizens but as hostages. Free rein was given to this hostility in the martial law courts that were then established, and that became distinguished for their ferocity and arbitrariness.

The Zionist network would, at that stage, have made little difference to official malice. By the same token, the armed self-defense organization created by the Zionist emissaries, the members of which were, according to Hillel, posted throughout the Jewish quarters on the outbreak of the Palestine war, could have done little to defend these quarters had the government wished to unleash the mob against them. The discovery of arms in the autumn of 1949 by the police led to a wave of indiscriminate searches, arrests, and tortures. The head of the community proclaimed a day of fasting, which was accompanied by a strike that closed Jewish schools and businesses. The Zionist underground organization had to shut down its activities. Many of its members fled Iraq, and others went into hiding.

These events led to a crisis within the community and its institutions. The chief rabbi, the official head of the community, Hakham Sasson Kheduri, was physically attacked in his office by a crowd of Jews protesting the activities of the police. Hakham Sasson had no sympathy for the Zionist underground. The attack may have been instigated by them, or may have been the outcome of a propaganda campaign against him. In the event, he felt unable to continue in his office, and resigned at the end of 1949. He was succeeded by a well-connected and influential notable who seems to have been better disposed to the Zionist underground. A change of Iraqi government also softened the heavy-handed policy of the regime. In February 1950 another change of government brought to power Tawfiq al-Suwaydi. Suwaydi allowed those Jews who indicated within one year their desire to leave Iraq to do so. They would have to give up Iraqi citizenship. The preamble of the law declared that it was undesirable to keep in the country Jews who wished to leave and who were now doing so illegally.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Iraqi government and the Jewish communal authorities did not expect more than about 10,000 Jews to leave the country. But during the year in which Suwaydi's law had currency, the emigration movement gathered momentum. The more people registered, the more others followed, either from force of example or because families were unwilling to be separated. By the end of the year, all of Iraq's Jews, except for an insignificant minority, had opted to leave their country for Israel.

HOW DID this come about? The sequence of events is by no means clear. We may dismiss Hillel's assertion that the Iraqi Jews were "Zionist almost by nature." These Jews were highly unpolitical. They certainly entertained no visions of political and national salvation to be achieved through Zionism in Palestine or Israel. They may have been panicked by bombs thrown at Jewish businesses or places of resort. It is still not clear who was responsible for the bombings. But much more important was the ferocious and lawless onslaught on their sense of security carried out by the Iraqi police and martial law courts.

Suwaydi's law came at the end of a period of relentless persecution, and seemed to offer relief. Hillel attributes the change of policy to the activities of the Zionist underground in organizing illegal emigration via Iran during 1949—an activity in which he was prominent. Certainly, after the change of policy, the underground Zionist organization came into its own. The underground was able, somehow or another, in spite of the insignificant numbers involved and their lack of standing in the community, to become the hidden, anonymous, and effective government of the Iraqi Jews. How this came about is also highly obscure. The only hint of the change of Jewish leadership that we are given in Hillel's account is a passing allusion to the "simmering resentment" felt by the daughter of Chief Rabbi Hakham Sasson's successor—who remained head of the community until 1954—"over what she saw as incursions on her father's prerogatives during the difficult early months of the airlift."

The organization of this airlift by the Israeli authorities, and by Hillel, who went back to Baghdad under yet another false identity, is the most important affair recounted in this book. According to Hillel, he obtained the consent of the Iraqi government for the transport of the Iraqi Jews by an American company with the help of an Iraqi tour operator in whose company the prime minister was a shareholder, and which stood to make a good profit from the transaction. (The arrangement made other airlines jealous, and the son of a former prime minister, Nuri al-a'id, who was simultaneously head of the civil aviation department and director of Iraqi Airways, had to be squared. He was paid a royalty on each body transported by the rival airline.)

All this meant that what had become the most important issue in the life of the community was, without anybody being aware of it or being able in any way to object, taken out of the hands of the communal authorities, and of individual emigrants as well. Their movement out of Iraq and into Israel, the conditions under which it took place, and its rhythms became the exclusive affair of a small, anonymous group that, for a very short but most crucial period, wielded enormous power over the fate of the community. Insofar as they were at all controlled, it was by the Israeli authorities, with whom communications were precarious, and who were themselves, it seems, divided about the best way of dealing with this emigration.

In Israel in 1950-51, moreover, there were no facilities for receiving large numbers of almost destitute emigrants—destitute because the Iraqi government very severely regulated the luggage, valuables, and currency that the Jews could take out, and because at the end of the year's registration period, when the overwhelming majority had become stateless persons, a law was suddenly passed that their possessions were forfeit to the Iraqi government. The original law allowing emigration had been silent on this point, and neither the communal authorities nor the now dominant underground had sought clarifications or guarantees on this crucial issue. From Hillel we learn that Levi Eshkol, later prime minister of Israel, then treasurer of the Jewish Agency, told him that Israel had no ability to absorb these emigrants, that it should be made "absolutely clear to them that conditions are very difficult, downright primitive." David Ben-Gurion, on the other hand, told Hillel to go and "bring them quickly." Ben-Gurion's wishes were followed, while the warnings upon which Eshkol insisted were not given. It may be that, as Hillel argues, it all turned out for the best. But, in the end, who can really know? What is certain is that large numbers of people had decisions vitally affecting their own lives surreptitiously taken out of their hands.

ELIE KEDOURIE

Elie Kedourie is professor of politics at the University of London and the author of *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire 1914-1920* (Westview Press).

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

quent installment ("Veepgate," September 12 & 19) declares Senator Kennedy to be "the Democratic equivalent of Quayle, a dim bulb with piles of money and a checkered past." Now wait a minute. Even one who disapproves of Kennedy's politics stretches reality to place him on equal footing with the boyish cheerleader from Indiana.

MARY B. KEIR
Flushing, New York

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Act of August 12, 1970: Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code) 1A. Title of publication: THE NEW REPUBLIC 1B. Publication number: 00286583 2. Date of filing: October 1, 1988 3. Frequency of issue: weekly except 1/4, 7/18, 8/8, 9/12 3A. Number of issues published annually: 48 3B. Annual subscription price: $56.00 4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036 5. Complete mailing address of general business offices of the publisher: 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036 6. Names and addresses of publisher, editor-in-chief, editor, managing editor: Publisher: Jeffrey L. Dearth, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. Editor-in-Chief: Martin Peretz, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. Editor: Michael Kinsley, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. Managing Editor: Dorothy Wickenden, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. 7. Owner: Martin Peretz, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. Anne L. Peretz, 1220 19th St., NW, #600, Washington, D.C. 20036. 8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1% or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None. 9. Not applicable. 10. Extent and nature of circulation: Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: A. Total copies printed: 115,392 B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors: 5,185 2. Mail subscription: 94,419 C. Total paid circulation: 99,604 D. Free distribution by mail, carriers, or other means, samples and complimentary, and other free copies: 2,660 E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 102,264 F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing : 856 2. Return from news agents: 12,272 G. Total (sum of E and F): 115,392 Actual number of copies of a single issue published nearest to filing date: A. Total number of copies printed: 120,967 B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors: 4,485 2. Mail subscription: 99,829 C. Total paid circulation: 104,314 D. Free distribution by mail, carriers, or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 3,015 E. Total distribution (sum of C and D): 107,329 F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 856 2. Returns from news agents: 12,782 G. Total (sum of E and F): 120,967 11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. (signed) Thomas B. Hicks, Circulation Director

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Spin Cycle

ALL THOSE WHO love to see the conventional wisdom confounded ought to be cheering the first presidential debate. Issues will never come up, said one anchorman just seconds beforehand. The format allows only for set speeches, said any number of pundits, not for combative exchange. Without a panel filled with TV anchors, somebody in the Bush camp told the *Wall Street Journal*, the questions will all be soft. Almost everybody said and wrote that the result would undoubtedly be a boring draw. Wrong, wrong, all wrong.

TO BE perfectly honest, I shared some of the conventional wisdom beforehand, especially about the limitations of the format, but I emphatically do not share the common view expressed afterward that this debate ended up a tie. I feel qualified to pronounce. On October 11, 1984, George Bush drove me to distraction with his hyperactive, sycophantic (toward Ronald Reagan), cheap shot-laden debate performance against Geraldine Ferraro. I said what I thought to various Bush aides who came to spin the press room in Philadelphia, and they expressed such deep offense that I wondered if I wasn't being unfair. But according to a piece by David Hoffman in the *Washington Post* on September 24, Bush's advisers—and even Bush himself—actually thought the 1984 debate performance was a disaster. So I feel vindicated and emboldened to declare about this year's first debate: Dukakis wiped Bush out.

BUSH HAS IMPROVED since 1984, when his voice was high-pitched and whiny, when he falsely accused Ferraro and Mondale of saying that U.S. Marines killed in Lebanon had "died in shame" (they said, "in vain"), and when he blurted out, meaning to criticize Democratic negativism, "Whine on, harvest moon." After his masterful speech at the Republican convention (albeit far better written by Peggy Noonan than delivered by Bush), I found myself thinking, even hoping, that Bush really had grown, developed gravitas, and become somebody we'd be confident having as president. But the old Bush is back. I actually don't object to his making an issue of Dukakis's veto of the Pledge of Allegiance requirement in Massachusetts, or of Dukakis's self-proclaimed card-carrying membership in the ACLU. Dukakis should have introduced a Pledge law he could sign, and long ago he should have distanced himself from the kookier positions taken by the civil liberties group. What is objectionable is Bush's making negative issues like these the central themes of the campaign. It bespeaks a lack of trust in the positive programs for which he claims to stand. And that's the key difference that the presidential debate brought out. Dukakis was cool, self-assured, disciplined, and logical. Bush, as in 1984, came off nervous, easily rattled under pressure, lacking in self-control, and prone to making mistakes.

THE MEDIA MEASURE of success or failure in a presidential debate is: Did the candidate commit a gaffe? Bush did not, in the sense of Gerald Ford's liberating Poland or Jimmy Carter's consulting Amy on nuclear policy. But if he didn't make gaffes, he sure committed goofs, often just in time to ruin an otherwise good debating point. Bush argued cogently that Noriega was indicted under Reagan after previous administrations also had done business with him (though surely not seven, as Bush claimed, dating back to Eisenhower). Then Bush added: "So call off those pickets that are trying to tear down seven previous administrations," as though Dukakis were undermining the very institution of the presidency by making an issue of Noriega. Bush made a good point, saying he wouldn't "give away a couple of aces in that very tough card game" of nuclear negotiation with Moscow. Then, muffing his advantage, he forgot whether his chips were called Minuteman or MX, got all flustered, muttered "It's Christmas. It's Christmas" in reference to a previous goof, and compounded it all with an envious crack at cool customer Dukakis: "Wouldn't it be nice to be the ice man and never make a mistake?"

ALONG THE WAY, Bush managed to insult all the people of Boston while trying to make some point about Angola. "There are three people on our ticket," he said, meaning to point up differences between Dukakis and his running mate. Trying to defend the administration's record on housing the poor, he said, "We're not going to do it in that old Democratic liberal way of trying to build more bricks and mortars," meaning public housing. Again and again, Bush grabbed bits of inside-Washington jargon, incomprehensible to most citizens, to explain his position on problems: the McKinney bill (to house the homeless), the GCC (the association of Arab states in the Gulf), the W-I-C (nutrition assistance for women, infants, and children).

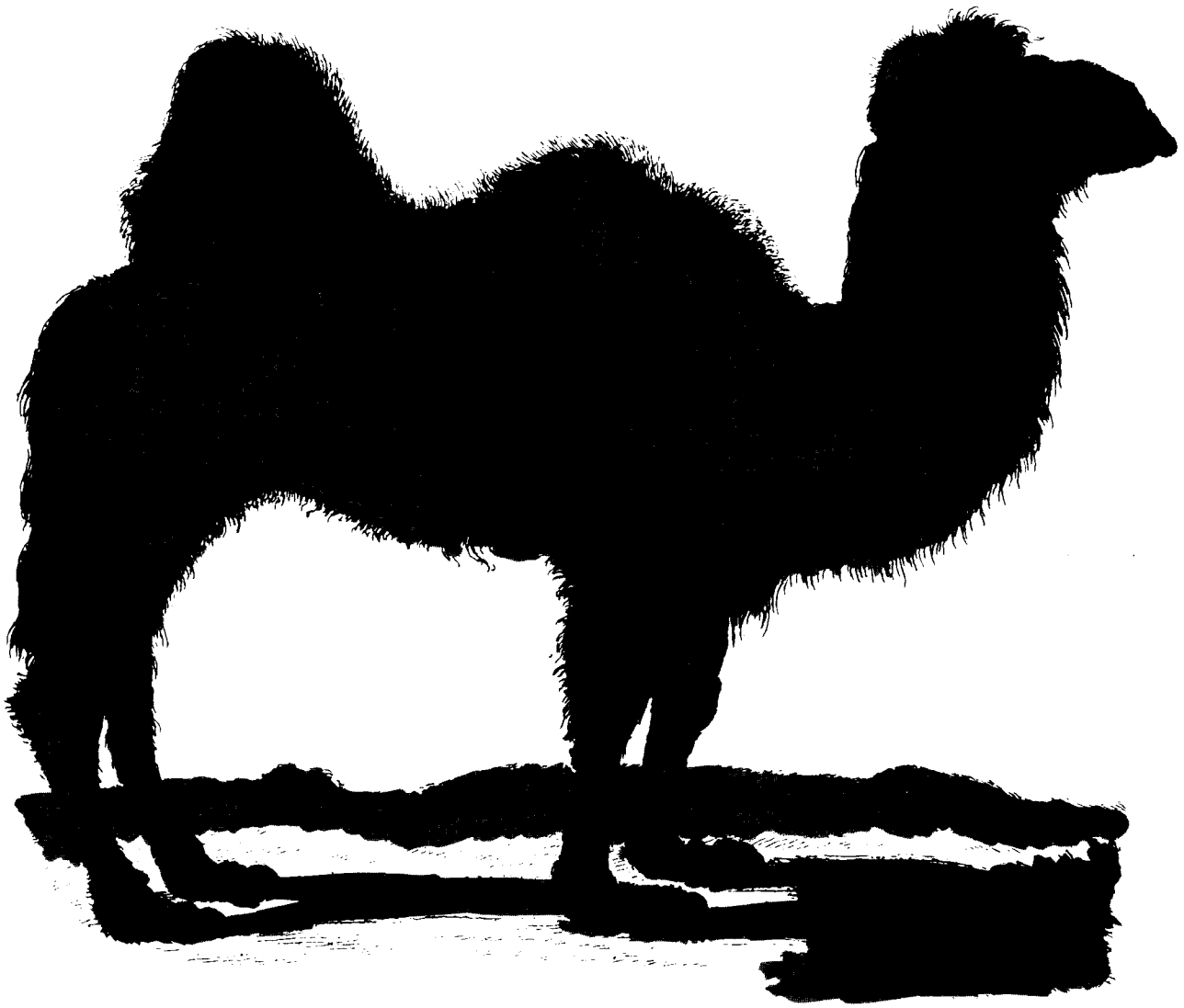
DOES THIS MEAN anything important? I think it does. Bush reveals himself to be a short-term tactician who tries to get past immediate political problems—appeasing this group, endorsing that program—rather than a strategist who tries to consider a problem in all its dimensions. Dukakis, on the other hand, seems to be a man who does try to think things through. When he finished explaining his stand on health insurance, welfare reform, and strategic defense, any ordinary American could tell where he was coming from and going, regardless of whether he or she agreed. The crowning example of Bush's failure to think was his stance on abortion. Once for it, he now wants to make it illegal—possibly for moral reasons, possibly for political ones, or both. But he had to confess he hadn't considered whether women who have abortions ought to be punished or not. A less obvious example was SDI. Bush says he will deploy it when ready, which necessitates testing, but also wants to conclude a START agreement with the Soviets. Those two positions—each attractive to a segment of the electorate—are almost certainly mutually exclusive.

BUSH PRESUMABLY has a high IQ—he was Phi Beta Kappa at Yale, as was Dukakis at Swarthmore—but the evidence suggests he doesn't use it; Dukakis does so energetically. Bush thinks it's enough to say that "a thousand points of light" (doubtless someone else's phrase) will solve the nation's problems. Dukakis knows we need a plan. The Bush campaign wants us to believe that Dukakis is simultaneously an "ice man" and a "far out" liberal, but the first debate showed me a cool moderate on the Democratic side—and on the Republican side, an eight-year stand-in for the president who still has not done his homework.

MORTON M. KONDRACKE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We Believe Letting More Than One Person Handle Your Pension Investment Is Like Having A Committee Design A Horse.



At Loomis, Sayles, we believe there are some things in life better left in the hands of the individual. And pension fund investments are certainly one of them.

Which is why at Loomis, Sayles, we give our portfolio managers authority to exercise their individual judgement and expertise. Because along with that authority comes responsibility, which, in turn, gives way to a sense of accomplishment, and an energy of surprising intensity.

It's an investment approach that attracts and rewards excellence in the individual.

It's an approach that allows our managers to take advantage of sudden changes and opportunities in the market. Without waiting for a committee response.

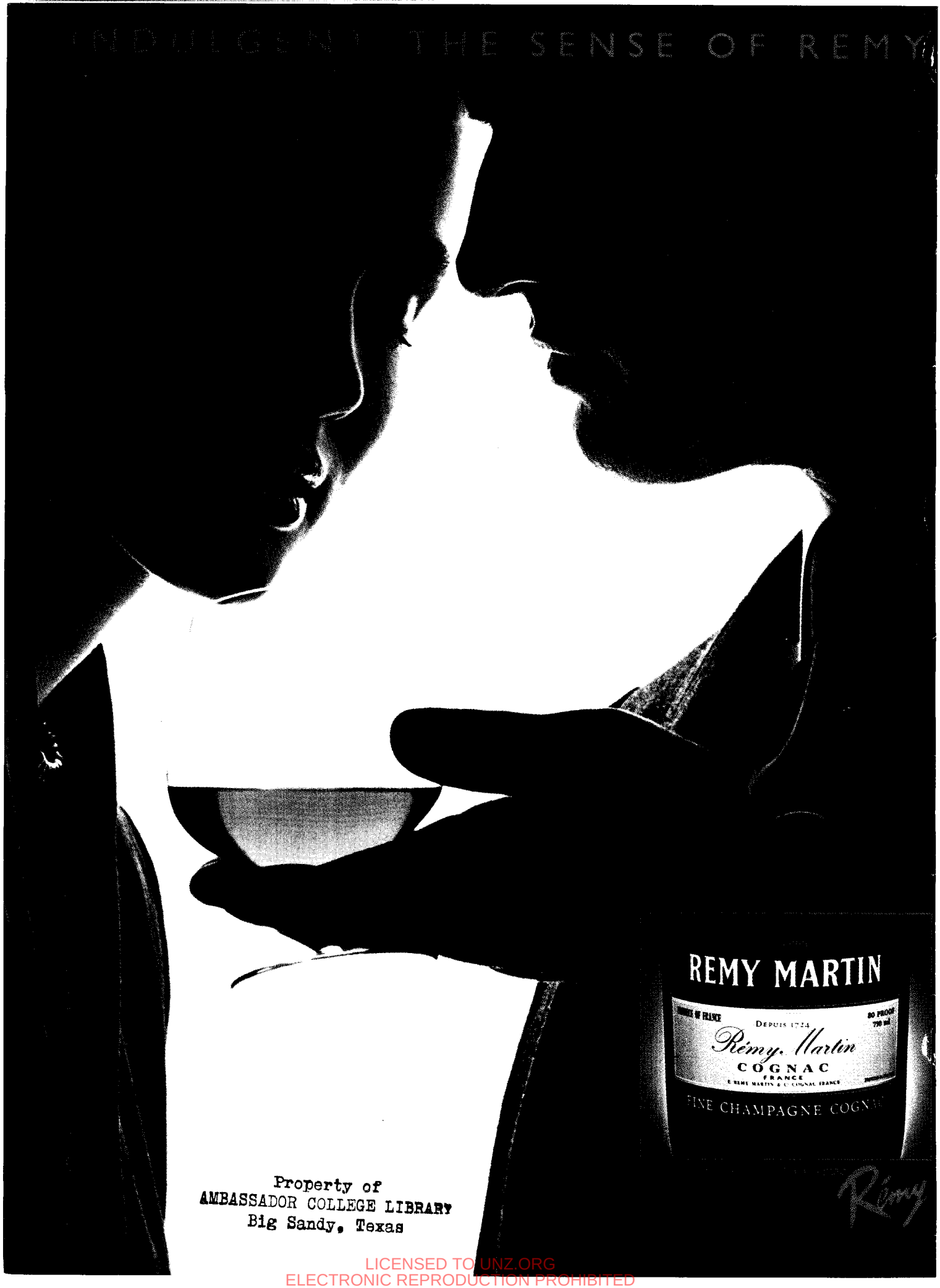
It's an approach that, with the backing of our extensive resources, has achieved over $22 billion in assets currently under management.

And for those corporations perceptive enough to realize the benefits of individualized management, it's an approach that may be right for you.

LOOMIS, SAYLES & COMPANY
Investment Counsel Since 1926

Boston Chicago Detroit Memphis Milwaukee New York Pasadena Philadelphia San Francisco Washington, D.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED